

THE ACADEMY

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, SCIENCE & ART

No. 1852

NOVEMBER 2, 1907

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Gujarat College Board, Ahmedabad.

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LIFE AND LETTERS

WE have received, unfortunately too late for inclusion in this week's ACADEMY, a letter concerning the censorship of plays, signed by numerous dramatic authors. As, however, the letter has appeared in all the leading newspapers, our readers will already doubtless be familiar with it. Our views on the question of the censorship are so pronounced, and have recently been so ably expounded in our columns by, among others, Mr. Bernard Shaw and Mr. St. John Hankin, that it is scarcely necessary for us to restate them. There is one aspect of the matter, however, which we do not feel has been treated as frankly as it deserves to be treated. Objectors to the censorship are never tired of saying that it is not to the man but to the office that they object. We do not take that view. If the Censor were really qualified for his post there would be very little room for legitimate grievances. Without any desire to be impolite to Mr. Redford, who is no doubt animated by the best intentions, we cannot refrain from giving it as our opinion that he is absolutely unfitted for the post which he occupies. An intelligent Censor would not have forbidden the production of such plays as *Monna Vanna*, *Maternité*, and *Ghosts*, while sanctioning the performance of *La Dame de Chez Maxim*, *L'Education du Prince*, and *The Christian*.

The reading room of the British Museum is again open to the public from November 1st. Two days ago, when an inspection of the improvements was invited, we found the room lighter than it has probably ever been before, smelling, indeed, of varnish and drying media, but, we are pleased to say, no longer stinking of hot dirt. The improvement which chiefly interests readers consists in the thorough overhauling and cleansing of the warming and ventilating system. The redecoration, such as it is, has been wisely confined to painting the spaces ivory-white and gilding the courses. The arrangements remain unaltered, with the exception that old editions of books in the reference shelves have been replaced by new ones. If the abominable atmosphere of the great room has been permanently abolished, readers will have no reason to complain of such inconvenience as they may have experienced by its temporary closure. During that time all reasonable facilities for consulting books were given in the inner library on application to the chief librarian, and the staff was enabled to supply them much more promptly than usual.

We much doubt whether readers requiring books unobtainable elsewhere in London were not better served while the reading room was closed than at ordinary times. Our experience was that the inner room was never inconveniently crowded, and was frequently not more than half filled. From the number of applications which the chief librarian received and the proportion of applicants he admitted, he will be able to form some estimate as to the proportion of people habitually using the reading room to read books which they could easily obtain elsewhere. It is a great pity that something cannot be done to relieve the congestion in the reading room. Under the present arrangements, readers there have frequently to wait from half to three-quarters of an hour before they can obtain the books which they want. Let facilities for consulting rare books be left as they are or even extended, but some restriction in the use of common books at the British Museum would be no greater interference with public rights than the prohibition to eat meals in the National Gallery, and it would facilitate the access of the public to the rare books which no other library possesses.

New York is not the only place, it appears, which betrays a magnificent solicitude for the moral and spiritual well-being of its people. The Committee of the Dewsbury Free Library, having, we learn from a daily paper, been informed that a gentleman named Henry Fielding, since deceased, wrote certain novels which the good people of Dewsbury desired to read, convened a meeting to discuss the propriety of placing these works in the lending department. A question arising as to whether they were wholly proper, each of these worthy gentlemen agreed to take one home—hiding them, doubtless, in the covers of an old volume of *Chatterbox* or *Little Folks*, in order to avoid arousing suspicions in the bosoms of his virtuous family. Shortly afterwards the Committee met to report progress, notes were compared, and the contents of the works of the late Mr. Henry Fielding—a pig who wallowed in the filthiest of filth—were unanimously condemned as “disgraceful,” “shocking,” “not fit to be read by anyone.” Their addition to the lending library being “quite out of the question,” one member moved that, in order to show their detestation of such productions, one of them should be publicly burned, and “*Amelia*,” which pleased Thackeray because of its extreme morality, was selected for the purpose.

There is a nice collection of some forty drawings by deceased Masters of the French, Dutch, and English schools to be seen at Mr. Patterson's Gallery, 5 Old Bond Street. It is a pity that the entrance from the street is so inconspicuous as to be easily overlooked by visitors who do not already know that good things are to be frequently found within. The present collection is no exception, it contains many very interesting drawings, and none without their own value. This compliment cannot always be paid to larger and more conspicuous collections. Of the French drawings, which hang first on the walls, one of the most interesting is an early sanguine study of a man seated, entitled “*Meditation*,” without ascription. We notice that Mr. Bowyer Nichols suggests Trinquesse, surely a more probable ascription than Fragonard, who has also been suggested; at any rate, the drawing is a fine and attractive example of that period. There are also good drawings ascribed to Lancret, Fragonard, Dumontier, and Clouet; the last ascription is perhaps the least convincing of the four, though the drawing itself, a man's portrait, is the most important. We cannot quite accept the authenticity of the Boucher design; on the other hand, Mr. Bowyer Nichols does accept it, though he does not particularly admire the drawing. Among

the later drawings there are three very characteristic Corots, showing—especially in the case of No. 12—his immense power of expression in his roughest fashion. We are not surprised to see that No. 12 has already been sold. There is also a complete Mullet drawing, which, if it is as good as it looked in the rather obscure light in which we happened to see it, should also find a purchaser quickly.

The most notable among the Dutch drawings are a rather important Rembrandt wash-drawing and a Terburg portrait of a man. Considering their masters, neither strike us so much as they do Mr. Bowyer Nichols. The Van Goyen "View of a Town" is good, and gayer than usual. The English group contains an admirable Bonington—"A Venetian Girl"—of the authenticity of which there can be no possible doubt. It is perhaps the drawing most characteristic of its master in the whole collection. There are a fine early Gainsborough pencil landscape, an excellent and interesting early Turner with two or three of his very impressionist vignettes, and two of Constable's admirable little portfolio pencil sketches. The De Wint, "Carting Wood," is elaborate in design, but not very agreeable in tone. Finally there is a landscape by W. J. Muller, which pleases us better than almost any other by that artist, and approaches near to De Wint. There is very little of the heaviness and over-elaboration which characterise Muller's work. Anyone who wants a specimen of it could not do better than purchase Mr. Patterson's water-colour drawing.

Our contemporary the *Evening Standard* gives an interesting note in its issue of October 30, on a description by M. Clermont Ganneau of a discovery of a papyrus at Elephantia, made by the German scientific mission there, which is working side by side with the French mission to which M. Ganneau belongs. The papyrus, which is in Aramaic, is an important and rare discovery, in that it throws light on Hebrew history, and may prove historically an addition to the book of Nehemiah. It is a petition from the Jewish inhabitants of Elephantia to the Persian Governor of Samaria in the seventeenth year of Darius. The inhabitants petition for permission to rebuild the "Temple" to Jehovah on the island, destroyed three years previously. The petition had been preceded by substantial gifts to the Governor, and contains the promise of further offerings. It further describes the destroyed building as built of massive blocks of stone, with seven gables, columns of granite, and a roof of cedar, and relates that it was built by the Jews in old times, and had been particularly spared by Cambyse when he conquered Egypt and destroyed the Egyptian temples. A remarkable point is that the inhabitants promise to offer up sacrifices to Jehovah on the new altar and to pray without ceasing for the Governor's welfare. Presumably the Elephantine Jews were not Jews of the strict observance, for they speak both of a temple and an altar not at Jerusalem. On the other hand they mention that they have already appealed for help to Jehohanan, the high priest at Jerusalem, and the orthodox princes of the House of Judah.

In September a bronze cast of the heroic equestrian statue *Physical Energy*, by the late G. F. Watts, was placed in position on the cross-paths between the Serpentine and the Round Pond in Kensington Gardens, and for days the muffled figure and surrounding paling excited the curiosity of passing nursemaids and errand boys. Ten days ago the monument was obscurely unveiled by a minor official, and the inauguration has been passed over in silence by a press wholly concerned with gambling, crime and

petty politics. In Paris a similar ceremony would have been attended by all the intellect of the city, and the columns of the evening journals would have been filled with reports of the speeches and photographs of the sculptor and his work. In England we arrange these things differently, and the chilly reception of this noble work is a characteristic confession of our national indifference to the fine arts. The site is not badly chosen, though placed on the grass the public would have learnt more easily that sculpture of this order is to be regarded from a distance, and a loftier pedestal would have made the monument more impressive. From the modeller's standpoint *Physical Energy* is far from perfection, the chest of the rider is infantile, and many parts are faulty; but if Watts here shows himself weak where Rodin is so strong, he also exhibits consummate mastery just where the French master is weak—namely, in decorative grouping. As a rhythmical arrangement of flowing lines and carefully balanced masses, *Physical Energy* thrills us by the large harmony of its composition, and takes its place among the great works of our age as a vital expression not only of the poet-sculptor's thought, but of that mid-Victorian feeling for design which gave us a golden decade of English illustration.

The *Times*, in these latter days, has developed a most innocent and child-like method of dealing with those with whom it disagrees. Only the other day an anonymous correspondent was denouncing Mr. Murray in its columns in connection with the publication of Queen Victoria's letter, and displaying a most striking concurrence of opinion with the journal to which his remarks were addressed. Now it is Mr. Wilfrid Blunt who has incurred the wrath of the great Anglo-American newspaper. In the *Times* weekly edition of October the 25th there appears a short article dealing with Sir Edward Malet and Mr. Wilfrid Blunt, in which it is remarked that Mr. Blunt's contention as to the meaning of a certain passage in his book on the British occupation of Egypt is, "of course, absurd." Naturally the *Times* is bound to know more about the meaning of any passage in any author's work than the author himself. By a curious coincidence, which would have roused the wonder of Mr. Vincent Crummies, a person who signs himself "Once a twenty-years resident in Egypt" happened to write to the *Times* at the same time on the same subject, and his letter appears below the article we have referred to. The former inhabitant of the land of the Pharaohs (who, by the way, divulges the interesting fact that he used to be the correspondent of the *Times* till he got what is vulgarly called "the sack") endorses the views of the *Times*, and proves his eligibility as a critic and the reliability of his sources of information by remarking that Mr. Blunt was known in Cairo as "the mad Englishman, who would greedily swallow anything," and by the following elegant sentence, which we quote in full:

The origin of Mr. Blunt's megalomania and self-imposed mission was always popularly ascribed to the fact that he married a connexion of Lord Byron. Byron was a poet—Mr. Blunt wrote poetry. Byron espoused the cause of Greek liberty, and Mr. Blunt espoused the cause of what he called Egyptian liberty. The parallel was incomplete, for Byron died at Missolonghi and Mr. Blunt lives at Crabbet Park.

Clearly Mr. Blunt has been guilty of the most deplorable conduct, he ought to have died at Alexandria or somewhere else in Egypt, and he actually has the temerity to be alive, not, it is true, at Crabbet Park, where he has not lived for fifteen years, but, at any rate, in England. If anybody has ever had any kind of doubt that the *Times* is and was absolutely right in everything it has ever said on this subject, this damning fact ought to settle it in the mind of "any unprejudiced reader."

SIBYLLA CRUCIATRIX

Daughter of Night and Chaos, in those eyes
The triple Furies, slumbering, wait the hour
When, waking, they may loose their scorpion power
On him who, hotly hastening to be wise
In hidden things, thy unvoiced "Nay" defies,
Praying thee, of the skill that is thy dower,
To read his fate, and from thy flame-lit bower
Beholds thee as the torturer arise.

Yet not in vain of Fate he questions thee:
Only from whirlwind Furies shall he gain
Knowledge of thy diviner self, to see
Thy soul transfigured on the Mount of Scorn,
Worship aright hands that his heart have torn,
Beauty triumphant in her power to pain.

IXION.

THE YOUNG POET

If there be any grief
For those lost eremites
That live in lonely tombs,
It is on Autumn nights,
At falling of the leaf;
It is when pale October,
Relentless tree-disrober,
Invades their silent homes.

But him no Autumn's chill
Shall have the power to harm:
Predominant his lyre
Shall keep remembrance warm,
And leave him lovely still;
And spirits softly winging
Shall listen to his singing,
And weep for his desire.

He loved and sang and sinned
With roses on his brow.
Alas, for all his pride!
His eyes are eaten now,
He's lighter than the wind.
The veil of love is riven,
The sin by Death forgiven,
The singer glorified.

Autumn has killed the rose:
O mock him not with flowers:
Set up no squared stone!
Take him to pass the hours
Where the grey nettle grows.
With scant and scarce adorning
Let him who praised the morning
Lie here, alone, unknown.

JAMES FLECKER.

LITERATURE

AMERICA IN THE ASCENDANT

The American Revolution. Part III. By the RIGHT HON. SIR GEORGE OTTO TREVELYAN, Bart. (Longmans, Green and Co., 12s. 6d.)

It is perhaps to be regretted that Sir George Trevelyan, instead of competing with American historians in relating the story of their revolution, should not have continued his fascinating "Early History of Charles James Fox." No biography of the Whig statesman that has any pretension to literary merit has yet seen the light, unless we can regard as such the piquant "Commentary" by Landor that has been recently disinterred. But perhaps Sir George may yet give us this. Meanwhile, let us be thankful for a piece of history that is readable as well as scholarly, and is not disfigured by partisanship.

The ground covered in the present volume includes the Saratoga campaign, related in three chapters; Washington's operations against Howe and Clinton in New Jersey and Pennsylvania in 1777-8, covering rather more; with two final chapters dealing with the situation in Europe which resulted in the intervention of France. Military matters are treated of in great detail and with sufficient thoroughness, and the doings—and misdoings—of Congress are handled concurrently and brought into due relation with them; whilst the strategy of Downing Street is scathingly glanced at. For those to whom drum-and-trumpet history does not appeal, there is the thinly-masked trafficking of Franklin and Vergennes, aided by the *remuant* personality of Caron de Beaumarchais, and a piquantly malicious account of the early attempts of the fledgling republic at diplomatic intercourse in other European countries.

Those who are tired of hearing Aristides called the Just will rejoice to hear that

when George Washington deemed it incumbent upon him to practise deception, he showed capabilities and aptitudes which placed him on a level with the most famous masters in the higher branches of the art.

He succeeded with a very weak force in thoroughly bluffing Sir William Howe, that eighteenth-century Buller, who, like his modern analogue, when it came to actual fighting was no mean antagonist. Also, anyone who is perchance a little fatigued at the contemplation of the almost superhuman patience and magnanimity with which the Great George so successfully combated both domestic and foreign foes, may be refreshed a little when he comes upon the single occasion when his equilibrium was disturbed. It was not when the American commander learnt that the men of Congress were being egged on by his enemies to replace him by the fatuous Gates, the nominal victor of Saratoga; or when the sapient civilians carped at him because, with a starving and hopelessly inferior force he refused to run his head against the fortifications of Philadelphia; nor even when they tried to estrange from him the young Lafayette. His public spirit and personal pride were proof against all these by no means trivial assaults. But when the egregious adventurer, Charles Lee, had, for no reason whatever, ordered the reluctant provincials to retreat before Clinton at Monmouth Court House, Washington rode up and called his subordinate exactly what he was, "a damned poltroon." The battle was "restored," and, as for Washington, "the matter may safely be left between himself and the Recording Angel," remarks Sir George, giving chapter and verse from "Tristram Shandy" at the foot of the page.

Whatever were the faults of the men who directed the affairs of the new republic—and the present historian admits that they handled some matters very badly—they at least achieved one thing of which a certain State

of no juvenile standing has proved incapable. "In the course of nineteen months they framed and promulgated four successive army systems, each of which, in spite of grave defects, had at least this merit about it," says our retired statesman, "that it produced some sort of army." Next to Washington's strategy the most important factors in the success of the Republican army were the services of Baron von Steuben, as Inspector-General, and Nathaniel Greene, as Quartermaster-General. But Germaine's incapacity and Howe's amazing sluggishness must not be left out of the account.

Sir George Trevelyan holds no brief against his countrymen. He represents Burgoyne as showing up well in an impossible position, and as earning the respect of his officers and men throughout; whilst he condemns without reserve the disgraceful sharp practice by which the Convention of Saratoga was evaded. A certain sentence, however, quoted in a note, seems to indicate that even Washington thought that some pretext had been afforded by the conduct of the British. This appears to have escaped the historian's notice.

Some of the British officers come in for unqualified praise. Of Brigadier Phillips, who commanded Burgoyne's artillery, it is said that "it may well be doubted whether a better artillery officer, in quarters or in the field, ever held a commission"; Lord Cornwallis, "who inspired the energies and kept the conscience of the British Army," was "the incarnation of chivalry and humanity"; and even Howe's tactics are held, on occasion, to have been unexceptionable. Baron von Riedesel, however, who in one passage is said to have been worthy to command an army corps, is in another place more justly appraised as "the husband of his wife," who has left to posterity such an interesting account of Burgoyne's fiasco.

In Washington's army we are told that vaccination—or rather, inoculation—was popular both among the soldiers and in the homes whence they came, inasmuch that "there had been nights when the parole and the countersign issued to the American sentries were the words 'Inoculation' and 'Health.'" And we gather from our historian's comments that he is not infected with modern heresies on this subject.

Sir George allows himself ever and again humorous allusions and applications. He tells us that

there was some tendency among the delegates at Philadelphia towards the system of mutual good offices, which, in the less stately nomenclature of modern politics, is called log-rolling.

But he hastens to explain that this was between State and State, not between man and man, and adds, caustically, that

Congress, in its earlier sessions, would not suffer by comparison, on the score of purity, with some very reputable and self-satisfied Parliaments in less disturbed times and in older countries.

And in comparing the French liberal *noblesse* of the eighteenth century, as described by de Ségur, with the great English Whigs of the first half of the nineteenth, he cites, obviously with his tongue in his cheek, the remark of a French politician to some of these latter:

What enviable men you are! You dwell in palaces and you lead the people.

Then, again, we are reminded how a certain New York political organisation of some notoriety to-day took its name from a non-political dining club of ante-Revolutionary days. These hundred and twenty Pennsylvanians (among whom were Dickinson and Galloway, loyalists, and Dr. Benjamin Rush and President Wharton, patriots), called themselves "the Sons of Saint Tammany," and adopted that title from a notable Delaware chief, who made a certain agreement with William Penn in sixth month, 1684, the terms of which agreement did not, thinks our historian, suggest any exalted notion of the Indian monarch's sagacity. Yet King

Tammanend, he declares, was no common personage; and he manifestly bore little resemblance to the "Boss" of to-day.

It is much to have a historian endowed with a sense of humour.

Sir George Trevelyan, like his uncle, the historian of King William, has, as Matthew Arnold would have said, his "heightened" way of putting things:

"No man alive could set a battle in array more artistically and impressively than Lord Cornwallis"; "Beaumarchais twice addressed the Royal Council at Versailles in a strain of fiery and picturesque eloquence which no Cabinet Minister that ever lived would venture to inflict upon his own colleagues."

Even more Macaulayesque, perhaps, is the comment upon Carlyle's description of Vergennes sitting at his desk, "like a dull punctual clerk":

"It is well for the tranquillity of Europe that such clerks do not often find their way to the top of the French Foreign Office."

And this more extended passage:

The discussion of military problems became the fashion of the day, even beyond exclusively military circles; and a dispute, which raged over the question of the attack in column and the attack in line aroused almost as keen partisanship in Paris as the musical controversy between the faction of Gluck and the faction of Piccini.

On the other hand, we do not believe that the worthy Victorian historian-statesman ever allowed himself to "drop into" slang, as does occasionally his more frivolous nephew.

In emphasising here the lighter aspects of this volume—we feel sure that the problems of strategy and statesmanship raised in it will have been amply dwelt upon in other quarters—a word should be spared for the author's delightful handling of the new diplomacy, as understood by Americans who were not Benjamin Franklins. Congress, it appears, obtained a copy of Vattel, and were able to

learn from its pages that every proposal, great or small, which they pressed on the attention of foreign Courts, were in flat and flagrant contradiction to the Law of Nations, they appointed a perfect swarm of envoys and agents, and invested them with excessive powers. They fixed the salaries of their ambassadors, and left them to be paid by the novel expedient of borrowing money from the Courts to which they were accredited. They arranged a separate cipher with each of their emissaries; they instructed him in the mysteries of invisible ink, and they carefully specified the weight of shot which would be required to sink his bag of papers if ever, in the course of a voyage, the ship in which they travelled was in danger of being overhauled by a British frigate.

But the practice of the new diplomacy was unfortunately discredited by notorious failure. Arthur Lee, "like other people who have not been wanted in Spain," was compelled to retreat beyond the Ebro to Vittoria, and thence across the Pyrenees, and met no more success in his attempts to approach Frederic of Prussia; Catherine, the Tsarina, "had no use for" Francis Dana, of Massachusetts; and Ralph Izard, of South Carolina, was never permitted even to cross the Alps in order to present his credentials at Florence. "Rebuffed in every quarter of Europe like so many commercial travellers forbidden to display their wares," is the cruel phrase with which this phase of trans-Atlantic diplomacy is dismissed. When it is added that more than half of such despatches as these gentlemen (who would fain have replaced the veteran Franklin) succeeded in inditing failed to escape the vigilance of British cruisers, the comedy of the situation becomes complete. For the gaiety of posterity it is, however, satisfactory that one letter of Arthur Lee arrived in safety. This gentleman's communication, addressed to Washington himself, was a report to the effect that the Prussian infantry were taught to fire upon the ground ten yards in front of them instead of at the object meant to be struck. The depression of the barrel in levelling was "found necessary to counteract the elevation which the act of firing gives to the musket."

With this piece of drollery we take leave of a book which, in both its weightier and its lighter aspects, is fully worthy of its author.

MORE RECENT POETRY

Ballad of Victory and other Poems. By DOLLIE RADFORD. (Alston Rivers, Is.)

Stray Sonnets. By LILIAN STREET. (Elkin Matthews, Vigo Cabinet Series, Is.)

Witcheries and other Verses. By MARGARET MACLEAN BOGLE. (Paisley: Alex. Gardner, Is.)

The Dead God and other Poems. By JAMES BLACKHALL. (Greening, 2s. 6d.)

Istar and Tammuz, and other Poems. By JOHN LEWIS BROWN. (Kegan Paul, Is. 6d.)

A Vision of Armageddon and other Poems. By WALTER TERENCE STACE. (Dublin: Hodges, Figgis and Co., Is. 6d.)

The O'Donoghue and other Poems. (Hodges, Figgis and Co., 3s. 6d.)

Wayside Verses. By ALEC JOY. (Elliot Stock, Is.)

Songs of Exile. By MAURICE BROWNE. (Samurai Press, 2s.)

Poems by Two Friends. (J. M. Dent and Co.)

Voces Amoris. By JOHN B. RANKIN. (John Long, 3s. 6d.)

Poems. By GEORGE A. NICHOLSON. (C. W. Deacon, 2s. 6d.)

LADIES, Kelts, Religionists, amiable Wordsworthians, insipid Lovers, and bold Realists figure in this motley summer crowd, with pretty little books of pretty little poems. The ladies, as a rule, though imitative, write with much more delicacy and precision than the sterner poets, who, carried away by the violence of their ideas or passions, revel in a welter of dashes and mixed metaphors. Miss Radford may be commended to those who like Mr. Bridge's poetry; she has the same quiet charm and effective workmanship, the same power of making everything dull. The merit of the poems is terribly even; none are bad, none are surprising. We quote:

Through all the golden summer-time
Your fancy follows me,
As lightly as the thistle-down
Comes floating out to sea.

Frailer than any flower that grows
Beside the changing tide,
It braves the waters carelessly,
Where I in danger ride.

But there will always be critics ready to mistake dulness for sanity; this mistake ruins our politics as well as our literature.

There is more variety in Miss Lilian Street's "Stray Sonnets," and the workmanship is equally delicate and refined. Miss Street says she has "tried to echo a few thoughts" from some sermons; it is a matter of some surprise to find really good poems written round a theme which some of us might consider unpromising. There is a charming sonnet on the burning of love-letters, another one on hands:

The eye and mouth may well deceivers be,
And look and smile more than the heart doth hold.

but

None can change the likeness of the hands.

It is a new, simple, and rather beautiful idea.

Miss Bogle belongs obviously to the new Celtic school of poetry; one could belong to no better school. And although in her songs of mystery and passion Miss Bogle cannot attain that exquisite and subtle simplicity which is rendering Mr. Yeats's work immortal, yet several times the verse attains really fine mysterious effect. An admirable poem is "The Watcher," which begins thus:

Once in the weirdness of the night I stood
Beneath thick boughs in a beleaguered wood,
Where flowers untamed and matted grasses grew—
There came the fingers of the wind and drew
My hair so softly o'er my brooding eyes,
So humanly, it made the tears arise . . .

The following lines also have a sort of impassioned rhetoric, which renders them very attractive:

I have been scorched in some long-smouldered fire,
I have been worn in some long-silenced war,
And now I look on Heaven from afar
Since that slow dying of my heart's desire.

There is a want of cohesion about Miss Bogle's verses, but they are very promising and vigorous.

The same epithets may apply to "The Dead God," a book of poems by James Blackhall, that deserves to be read. In its best passages Mr. Blackhall's verse moves one to an admiration half sincere, half amused, at its forcible naïveté. The poems remind one not unfrequently of Mr. John Davidson's most characteristic works. The first poem is an admirable ballad concerning men who go to find Christ's grave:

From sound of wind and sight of stars,
Where dripped the rock's eternal tear,
Where silence smote her prison bars
In secret and in fear.

They pried with spade and pick and drill,
Amid the dim rebelling light,
Into the secret of the hill
With dumb, unholy might.

There are many other excellent and curious passages. There is a poem to Rudyard Kipling which also deserves mention, not because of its excellence, but because of the novelty of treatment as contained in these four lines:

The songs you sing are songs of old,
You dare not sing the new,
Last remnant of the bards who told
Blood songs to those who slew.

The "Dead God" is the most admirable book by far of the dozen.

Mr. Brown has translated the legend of Istar and Tammuz from the Chaldaic original into fairly elegant English verse. It is a pretty legend enough, but it would have been prettier in perfectly simple prose. Some of the other poems are very bad. Some lines from the "Storming of the Ford"—

Fast on the crashing helmets the swinging axe-blows fell,
Their bravest, never yielding, died as became them well—

seem to me far less effective as a description of combat than these:

He lifted up his mace
And hit the awful dragon full on the face,

which is an excerpt from a very fine poem on St. George, written by a preparatory schoolboy.

There is included in the volume a prose poem also, called "In the Depths of Time." Prose poets should take warning against such vast and pompous subjects, giving opportunity for the use of words such as "æons," "orbs," and "galaxies." The greatest prose poems are always concrete and clear in their images.

"A Vision of Armageddon" need not detain us. The poems are either pretentious or sentimental. Will there ever be an end to this sort of thing?—

HYMN TO THE SEA.

Thou splendid might of crownless majesty,
Thou awful presence of the hoary main,
Unconquerable Ocean, in whose fee
All power is held, whose grandeur doth disdain
The lesser grandeurs of the crag and plain.

The last remark is indeed a superb thought.

Mr. D'Arcy's poems are also undistinguished, though without such grave lapses into absurdity. One line is rather haunting:

She, like fair Nature, sleeps in balmy night.

"Wayside Verses," by Alec Joy, contains a few pleasant poems. It is good that a man should write an ode to his Pillow, and a very pretty ode:

And oft I kiss thee with my tears, for thou
Such sweet sad memories of past joys canst bring,

while the little prefatory poem deserves full quotation:

All that I say by others has been said,
And will be said again when I am dead;
Naught can we find but 'twas aforetime known,
Tho' each man thinks his treasure is his own;
For future poets, then, I care no jot,
And the wise dead, e'en they torment me not.
The fancies that in verse I here express,
Bear to my foolish mind but my impress,
And, reader, if they seem old-worn to you
Know that for me they are alive and new.

Here is a refreshing breeze of common-sense. Even if the dainty thought be a little awkwardly expressed, yet this breath of the eighteenth century is charming when one is weary of "Armageddon," or the "Desolate Moor" or the "Ode to the Springtime Thrush."

Most of the "Songs of Exile" by Maurice Browne attempt, in an enterprising fashion, to be sumptuous in the style of Keats. But the author only succeeds in reproducing the atmosphere of the dullest parts of "Endymion," and the book does not repay perusal.

There is no difference visible between the style of R.F.H. and R.O. in the "Poems by Two Friends"; all the poems read like a pale imitation of Mr. Watson's pallidities. They are such poems as the travelled don writes for a University paper:

Wordsworth, when last I trod these mountain ways
I loved thee not,

sings R.F.H.;

O what is love?

inquires R.O. on the opposite page.

Mr. Rankin's book is an unhappy document of love, sentimental, childish, and uninspiring. But the Jewel of Price is the first poem of the last book on our list. It is called "The Ballad of the Mad Atheist":

Alone, alone, alone, alone,
O, I lift this lonely cry,
For I've lost my faith and I've lost my God!
No soul so lone as I.

This elegant verse is repeated about ten times with slight variation, "even as a madman beats upon a drum." Did we dare complain of the dulness of modern verse? Read "On Deck":

My head is all whirling around,
I soon shall be ill, beyond doubt,
I have wondered what sea-sickness is,
And now I am fast finding out.

Perhaps this is meant to be, if not humorous, at least roughly ironical. But this is serious, about a heathen praying in his fane:

His words to me were idle wind
That stirred no motion in my mind:
For heathen gods I had no care
I thought them all a bane.

The book repays perusal.

ON TRANSLATING MOLIÈRE

The Plays of Molière in French. With an English translation and notes by A. R. WALLER, and an Introduction by GEORGE SAINTSBURY. (Edinburgh: Grant, 48s. net.)

THERE are two ways of translating Molière. You may attempt to give in English prose or verse the flavour, the quality of the original, or you may attempt to give in English prose the meaning of the original as nearly as English can do it. If you believe yourself a Congreve, or if, being a plain man, you wish to prove your title to a place in Bedlam, you will adopt the former course. If you are wise, and have even the normal allowance of modesty, you will adopt the latter. We opened these handsome volumes with

some trepidation. Part of the edition had gone down, we understood, under the captaincy of one Grant; had another Grant salved what was lost and completed it under "Divine visitation"? Mr. Waller's work on the English classics scarcely hinted a madman. Was it possible that the gods had struck him at last, and impelled him to try and match Molière's language with his own, and publish the monuments of Molière's genius and his own folly between the same covers? On reading his preface we breathed again. It proved him yet unsmitten of Fate. They would not worship him in the East: he was yet sane. He had attempted no more than "a rendering in simple modern English."

For a French text of Molière (that of Despois and Mesnard) issued so handsomely, with Leloir's etchings, no one could fail to be grateful. Mr. Waller's notes, too, are useful. So that there is good reason to welcome this edition before or without considering the thorny matter of the translation. Still, that matter must be faced; and at a glance more than one good reason occurs to us why the translation, too, should be welcomed, as serving a useful purpose.

At whom is it aimed? The preface tells us: at those who have no French, and at those who have some slight knowledge of the tongue, but not so much as to put them above the services of "a helpful companion in case of need." Now, it is not sufficiently recognised that the first class comprises to-day a very large number of people who are people of intellectual interests. It is recognised that in the case of Greek there is a large public—including, strange to say, many public school and University men—who must rely on Morshead, Way, or Gilbert Murray for their knowledge of the Greek drama. It is not sufficiently realised that there is a much larger class of intelligent, even studious people, who, having no French, must rely on translations for their knowledge of French literature. The study of the history of the drama is becoming more and more common; and that study is impossible without a working knowledge of Molière, who, from the return to England of Sir George Etherege down to the present day, is the most potent of all single foreign influences that have inspired and affected our playwrights. In Dr. Ward's "History of English Dramatic Literature," references to him are as thick as peas; and the much-to-be-pitied author who undertakes the task of continuing that history will find it necessary to make them equally thick in the later period. It is impossible to study the English drama without a pretty sound knowledge of Molière's characters and plots. No one knows their Congreve or their Wycherley, to take two famous names out of a hundred, without knowing what they borrowed from Molière, and how they altered it in the borrowing. And only when this is understood does Mr. Meredith's "Essay on Comedy" begin to reveal its full value as a work of extraordinary critical justice and acumen. As to the second class of reader at which Mr. Waller aims, it would be amusing to know how many of those who believe themselves good French scholars will be able to read this edition through with their eyes fixed always on the left-hand page, and with no recourse to the "helpful companion in case of need." The list of *hardes, nippes, et bijoux* in *L'Avare* alone is enough to stump three readers out of four. And the dialect scene in *Don Juan* between Charlotte and Pierrot, the man who declares himself under no obligation for his enjoyment of it to Mr. Waller's rollicking version in the lingo of Yorkshire, must be either a great French scholar or a shocking prevaricator.

There is another good reason why a plain prose translation of Molière should be welcome. There are

more "quotations" in him than in any other foreign playwright or poet. The names of some of his characters are constantly on our lips; we are constantly referring to things said or done by them. One might safely wager that in London alone at least one hundred persons every day speak or write of M. Jourdain, or use the phrase "talk prose without knowing it," and still remain in ignorance of who M. Jourdain was, where he comes from, and what was the exact remark about prose that he made. Again: "*tu l'as voulu, George Dandin*"—the phrase meets us at every turn; and *Tartufe* is a household word. We owe so much in the past to Molière that scraps of him are embedded in our common speech, and it is good that the quarry itself should be thrown open to all.

Bearing in mind, therefore, the aim of Mr. Waller's translation and the public to which it is primarily addressed, we are able to offer it a hearty welcome as a useful and valuable piece of work. It is not free from mistakes, some few of which might be noted against the appearance of the second edition, while the majority are not, strictly speaking, so much mistakes as inevitable failures to reproduce in English the whole point or all the *nuances* of some of Molière's inimitable lines. Those who are able to appreciate that point and all those *nuances* will not only understand the translator's enormous difficulties, but will remember that the translation was not made—like the translations of Greek epigrams handed round in common rooms—to tickle the palates of the epicures, but to serve the necessities of weaker vessels. And it must not be forgotten that these handsome volumes contain a perfect French text.

It remains to be said that Professor Saintsbury contributes an introduction—a useful feature in an edition not intended for scholars. In his riotous, most un-Molièresque way, the Professor succeeds in telling us a great deal about Molière's life and work, though we would warn everyone most earnestly against attaching too much importance to the new label he has invented for Molière—the "Master of the Laugh." Molière is master of much more than that; and, indeed, we question if that is his most prominent quality. He is surely as much, or more, the master of good sense; the shrewd, keen, logical, sound, honourable good sense of the man who scorns affectation of all kinds, and, animated himself by no very lofty ideals of conduct, is yet desperately convinced of the necessity of being true to oneself. There is, however, in the last paragraph of Professor Saintsbury's introduction a sentence which deserves quoting. "If God has given you brains, and courage, and the upward countenance; if you have loved; if you have had your day and lived your life, what more do you want?" An admirable spirit in which to send people to the study of the plays that follow.

CHATHAM

William Pitt, Earl of Chatham. By ALBERT VON RUVILLE. Translated by H. J. CHAYTOR, assisted by MARY MORISON. With an introduction by Professor HUGH E. EGERTON. 3 vols. (Heinemann, 21s.)

It is, as Professor Egerton remarks, an humiliating reflection that the first full and complete life of Chatham to appear in recent years should be the work of a German. One may indeed mitigate the humiliation by reflecting that the lives of statesmen and periods of history are cross divisions, and that the period in which the elder Pitt worked has been by no means neglected by our historians; further, sketches, at least, of Pitt have been most ably done by Mr. U. D.

Green and Mr. Frederic Harrison. Still, it is strange that a detailed life of him should not have appeared in England, and one feels that such a one—say by the Rev. William Hunt—might have had qualities which Dr. von Ruville's lacks.

For it is surely the case that a foreigner, however conversant with his subject, however *au fait* with our language and customs, and however painstaking, cannot grasp the significance of the minutiae of speech and conduct quite so precisely as an Englishman, cannot always so well divine the spirit of this or that proceeding. Again, an English historian of equal attainments with Dr. von Ruville would necessarily have brought to his task a special equipment in regard to knowledge which cannot be expected of the latter. Dr. von Ruville has, no doubt, studied everything directly bearing on his subject, but an English historian would also have been familiar with all sorts of memoirs and volumes of letters, not directly applicable, but building up in him a more intimate knowledge of Pitt's contemporaries, what manner of men they were, than Dr. von Ruville possesses. It would be ungracious to press the point, but it is necessary to mention it, because it may very probably explain what seems to the writer to be a serious fault in a work of many and great merits.

Dr. von Ruville evidently has something of the contempt traditional among German professors—and, unfortunately not wholly unjustified—for the materialism of the English, and he conceives our polity in Pitt's time to have been a mere plutocracy. The present writer is loath to say anything in favour of the Revolution nobles who imposed the hateful "Venetian Constitution" on our country for so long, but it is most unfair to say that their government, or that of their successors, was simply a government by the rich, in virtue of their riches. The system against which Bolingbroke fought in vain, and Chatham with success, was government by certain families in virtue of their birth. These Whig nobles were monstrously rich, no doubt, for the riches which began in the plunder of the Church in King Henry's time were enormously increased by unlimited power under the Georges, but they were essentially an exclusive aristocratic caste, not a plutocracy. Dr. von Ruville's bias in this matter leads him to his one great mistake in point of detail about Chatham's career. He says that the failure to take office in 1763 was due to a "consideration of purely material interests, his hope of a considerable inheritance"—that, to wit, which he got afterwards from Sir William Pynsent. As Mr. Egerton says, this rests on mere surmise; otherwise "our conception of Pitt would need profound modification." It would, indeed. The idea shows a very serious misconception of Pitt's character and the perspective of private and public claims in such a man. It is to be explained, as has been said, by the general bias.

But it is time, in a limited space, to come to Dr. von Ruville's merits. In the first place, he seems to be as absolutely impartial as any interest in his theme permitted. He proves it, as Professor Egerton again—whose introduction is a far better criticism of the work than any likely to appear in the periodic press—points out, by his disbelief of the accusation commonly brought against this country of having "betrayed" Frederick the Great in 1763. And throughout he shows an even temper, shirking no argument or fact. Then his thoroughness is beyond praise. It begins at the beginning, with an exhaustive account of "Diamond" Pitt and his adventurous, unscrupulous career, and of his respectable and amiable son, Pitt's father, and of all the influences which went to form the statesman in boyhood and early manhood. And it continues through all the intricate politics, the schemes and manoeuvres and personalities which the subject in-

volved. To start praising or criticising here and there on details would give a wrong impression of the whole, and in face of so much research and knowledge even a reviewer may well be modest. One does miss, perhaps, now and then, a style and manner rising to a great occasion, as in the account of Chatham's last speech in the Lords—where, by the way, he did not die, as pictorial tradition represents. The fact of translation, though this one is excellently well done, may account for this, though, to be sure, impressive writing is not the mark of modern histories.

From it all the figure of Chatham stands out much as we in England have been accustomed to regard him, albeit with the lights, so to say, somewhat toned down here and there. It was difficult for a foreigner to realise through what a maze of compromises a practical statesman in England has to steer, how slow we should be to think that even an apparent sacrifice of principle is real. Still, in this resolutely impartial account, the greatness of the man—with so many powerful forces against him, with disease constantly weakening and baffling his powers—stands clear, and we recognise that wide and sane conception of government and empire, that sure feeling for the people as a whole and absence of preoccupation with "interests" and classes, which Bolingbroke had, and Disraeli, and which in our day is so lamentably to seek.

G. S. S.

A BOOK ON TREES

Trees in Nature, Myth and Art. By J. ERNEST PHYTHIAN. (Methuen and Co., 6s.)

As regards the more definite subjects of interest in this book, the title is rather disappointing, but Mr. Phythian modestly disclaims in his preface more than an introductory purpose and the hope, that by means of quotation and reference he may draw attention to the works which are his authorities. In his first two chapters he deals with the mythical side of his subject; the soul of trees, and the worship directed to trees. Beyond quotations from Darwin, Romanes, Walt Whitman, Mr. J. G. Frazer and Mr. A. J. Evans, Mr. Phythian has little to say, or indeed to suggest. He approaches the subject with what we may call humble tolerance. Perhaps for this reason he chooses the familiar examples of Yggdrasil and the Maypole as illustrations. He would have been more interesting if he had ventured to make some mention of the still more familiar tree, the latest adored by men:

Ecce lignum Crucis, in quo salus mundi pependit. Venite, adoremus.

He would also have stimulated speculation if he had noticed that in the early centuries of Christianity ascetics often held the growing tree in horror. Sylvanus, an ascetic living on Mount Sinai, was found watering his garden with his face covered, and on being asked why he covered his face, he replied: "That mine eyes may not look upon the trees, and that my mind may not be distracted in its work, and become buried in the trees." Macarius, another monk, used to say: "Whenever you see cells turned towards the wood, know that their fall is near, and whenever you see trees planted at their doors, know that their fall is also at the door." Without some such points of suggestion, and with no power of expressing his unobtrusive pantheism (such as could in any fairness be even compared with the power of Richard Jefferies), it is surely useless for Mr. Phythian to seek to attract readers to works so attractive in themselves as those of Richard Jefferies and Mr. J. G.

Frazer. To name but two of these classics, their titles alone—"The Story of my Heart," "The Golden Bough"—are sufficient to attract anyone thoughtful enough to care for Mr. Phythian's own book.

He is more successful when he writes of Trees in Nature, of their external construction particularly, and of the impressions which their changes cause him, throughout the year. He quotes usefully his more technical authorities, Gerarde, Evelyn and Loudon, for they are not very accessible, and do not appeal much to general readers. He also brings to bear on his subject his own affectionate and clear-sighted observation. He has noticed—or at any rate some one has helped him to notice—such delicate contrivances as this: that as the leaf-stem dies, a little cork-like layer creeps from the branch round the root of the stem, and stops the little hole in the bark which the fall of the leaf so causes. He thus accounts for the fact which he had also noticed, that the dead leaves remain much longer on a severed branch than on a growing one. So, he sees that the fall of the leaves is a stage in the growth of the tree. He observes, or might do so, that we use the expression of a tree *shedding* its leaves, quite properly as an active process. On a larger scale, he has noticed that the trunk of the yew tree, above all other trees, resembles clustered columns. He indeed shows in many instances that he might have dispensed with the help which the late Mr. P. G. Hamerton's writings have given him; this help, however, he duly acknowledges. Now, Mr. Hamerton does not rank with the authorities whose names we have mentioned, and we really do not want to know whether he preferred chestnuts to walnuts on moral grounds. When we do, we can consult his family, or his works, which contain much that is more interesting. But for once, Mr. Phythian forgets his authorities and tells how reapers and mowers often begin to cut fields from the edges, and thus gradually contract the space of standing herbage. As this happens, the living creatures that shelter in it fly before their pursuers until they have no further refuge, then the men "are ready with sticks, and even guns, to kill them when at last they try to make their escape. The old belief was that the spirit of the corn entered into and escaped in the last of the living creatures to leave the corn." No one is in danger of supposing that Mr. Phythian discovered the existence of this belief, but when he makes it his own he makes it charmingly suggestive.

But Mr. Phythian is at his best when he deals with trees in art, and particularly in modern landscape painting. In treating of trees in architecture, it is superfluous now to discuss the question whether Gothic architecture consciously imitated tree-forms. Nor is the subject one on which the opinion of Charles Kingsley is material; the value of his memory is almost entirely personal. Mr. Phythian's own remark, that Gothic buildings resemble much nearer "winter woods at their barest," than "summer woods at their fairest," is more to the point, and though it may not be made for the first time, it expresses justly the similarity which probably strikes the majority of observers. In the chapter treating of trees in flat decoration from the earliest times up to the beginning of modern art, Mr. Phythian includes the one plate, out of twenty-four, which in any way really illustrates his text, an illustration taken from "A History of Art in Chaldea and Assyria," by Perrot and Chifetz, showing enamelled bricks at Khorsabad. It enables the reader to see for himself the early realistic treatment which Mr. Phythian describes well, namely, the spreading of the bole of the tree, the curve in both bole and stem, the drooping tendency of the lower branches, the perpendicular tendency of the higher branches, and indeed their whole natural arrangement so as to

allow each branch as much air and light as possible. Knossos has now been discovered sufficiently long for Mr. Phythian to have noticed the far earlier and more realistic treatment of its decorations, of which our readers have been reminded before in these pages.

It may reasonably be supposed that writers on Claude, Turner, Cotman, or on the English landscape painters generally, have already studied the best known authorities on the subject, and have used the judgment of their predecessors in forming their own. Constant quotation and reference becomes tedious, and we do Mr. Phythian more justice than he does himself, in treating his criticism as his own, judiciously formed on this principle. If we except his tendency to panopticism, to endeavouring to focus his view on religion, nature, art and literature, all at once—a feat which he cannot attain to—he makes, between pages 220 and 267, judicious and, in the main, true comparisons and classifications of the methods of tree-painting employed by the painters of whom he writes. These include, besides those we have mentioned, Richard Wilson, Gainsborough, John Crome, Constable, J. R. Cozens, Peter de Wint, David Cox, with others whom we have not space to enumerate. Though we cannot entirely agree with Mr. Phythian, these forty pages or so are well worth reading, and in particular those which deal with John Sell Cotman. In one passage we wonder whether Mr. Phythian has not been deceived by works of one of the other Cotmans. It is strange that he should only allude to Girtin once incidentally. To write of John Robert Cozens as characteristically a painter of mountain scenery seems to ignore his peculiar power of suggesting space in wide-stretching distant landscapes. It is not surprising that Mr. Phythian omits any mention of Alexander Cozens, yet it was he, much more than the Sandbys, who was the real precursor of Turner and the modern school, especially in a point particularly interesting to Mr. Phythian, the freedom from convention in his tree-studies.

Mr. Phythian's book will be pleasant to many readers; it should be so, independently of its other merits, on account of the very evident pleasure which he took in writing it. Nevertheless, on account of its weakness in originality and insufficient power of expression, we fear that we must place it too near the category of those books to the writing of which there which there is no end.

MARIE ANTOINETTE

The Last Days of Marie Antoinette. From the French of G. LENOTRE. By MRS. RODOLPH STAWELL. (Heinemann, 10s. net.)

M. LENOTRE's previous book "The Flight of Marie Antoinette," a translation of which was published by Mr. Heinemann a little while ago, will be remembered. The present book, though on quite different lines, is no less remarkable. For he has collected the documents and pamphlets which were written at the time of the Restoration by attendants and servants of Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI. They deal with the last days of the King and Queen's captivity, their trial and their death. The papers make poignant reading. They are written quite simply by unlettered men, and are full of human touches, which are indescribably affecting, and of simple facts, the horror of which is appalling. The crudity of the way in which these facts are written down by the men who witnessed their actual happening convinces in its own terrible manner. Nature exaggerates more than Art dare:

The Danjeau and the St. Simon of these dark days were a gaoler's wife, a menial of the pantry, an upholsterer, a servant girl, a gendarme, a sweeper—witnesses, that is to say, whose style does not aim at any great elegance. But I think their rugged sincerity will strike us as being more impressive than the poetical and pompous redundancies of the official writers of the Restoration.

And a little later on M. Lenotre remarks, with equal justice, with regard to the histories of which these narratives form the basis:

Everything that has been thought to be an improvement to them has, on the contrary, quite remarkably detracted from their value by robbing them of their vividness of things *seen* which no second-hand narrator, however clever he may be, can ever recapture. To the very clumsiness of these uncultured tales we owe many an involuntary revelation.

The narrative of Daujon is the most vivid and the most terrible. Daujon, standing on a chair, harangued the mob who were carrying the Princess de Lamballes' head to the Temple, bent on forcing Marie Antoinette to kiss its dead lips. By his skilful words he kept them from their horrible purpose, but he could not keep six ruffians from parading in front of the Queen's window with their ghastly trophy. That was what diplomacy bade him do in order that the King and Queen might not actually be torn to pieces. Daujon was a sculptor and liberal-minded. His party had as much authority with the rabble, maddened by the lust of blood, as any other party would have had. The beast in them had been nourished by long years of inhuman treatment, and sudden power had swept away the last shreds of their humanity. Daujon temporised with them, hating himself as he soothed and flattered them. You can see him standing on that insecure chair in the entrance, across which was tied a tricoloured sash: in front of him was laid out the headless body of the Princess, whose head, on a pike, was often pushed into his face, as its bearer lurched in the crowd. He spoke, and they listened. He was a brave man, this Daujon, the sculptor.

A brave man, too, was Turgy, the servant who for fourteen months kept up a correspondence between the royal prisoners and the outside world, in spite of the elaborate precautions to prevent this and at the risk of his own head. His narrative brings out the contrast between the manner of life at the Trianon and at the Temple prison, and shows the strange power of breeding to adapt itself to circumstances and to gain respect. His horror at the King and Queen's treatment is the horror of a man who sees his deity outraged. Very pathetic is it to read the code of signs which were invented, and which show how strongly hope lived in the hearts of the prisoners almost to the last of the long months of their captivity. Madame Elizabeth was most ingenious in the invention of these signals:

If the Austrians are successful on the Belgian frontier place the second finger of the right hand on the right eye. If they are entering the country by way of Lille or from the Mayence direction use the third finger as above. For the troops of the King of Sardinia use the fourth finger in the same way. *N.B.*—Be careful to keep the finger stationary for a longer or shorter time according to the importance of the battle.

All these accounts of incidents of the most exciting event that has ever happened in the history of nations cannot fail to be of absorbing interest. Every hour of the time was fraught with intense meaning. Every value of man or thing was undergoing a sudden terrible test, and the results of that testing are still felt and being worked out in the life of to-day. There is not a sense in us, of sentiment, of horror, of admiration, of pity, that these simple narratives of the last days of Marie Antoinette do not touch, and touch deeply.

The book is of poignant interest, and its interest is heightened by the illustrations, especially by the fac-similes of sketches which were actually made on the spot.

THE LIBRARY TABLE

Newman. Edited by WILFRED MEYNELL. *Robert Leighton.* Edited by WILLIAM BLAIR, D.D. ("The Library of the Soul." T. C. and E. Jack.)

SAVE the title of the series to which it belongs, there is nothing we cannot praise in this little "Newman." When one remembers how irritating a small book of this sort can be, it is almost surprising that this particular volume is so attractive; though, indeed, he would be a bad man who could make a really bad book of Newman's work. The present selections are offered without editorial introduction and without notes, being prefaced simply by some extracts from the "Apologia." It is no slight task to choose gold from gold, and the selection of these paragraphs from the "Apologia"—in fact of all the various extracts in the volume—must have been occasion of much perplexity. Here, among other generous acknowledgments (and Newman's ample courtesy in this way is charming), is the tribute to Archbishop Whateley—"who first taught me to weigh my words and to be cautious in my statements. He led me to that mode of limiting and clearing my sense in discussion and in controversy, and of distinguishing between cognate ideas, and of obviating mistakes by anticipation, which to my surprise has been since considered, even in quarters friendly to me, to savour of the polemics of Rome. He is a man of most exact mind himself, and he used to snub me severely on reading, as he was kind enough to do, the first sermons that I wrote, and other compositions which I was engaged upon." Words like these remind us, if we should be in danger of forgetting, that Newman's literary conscience was as acute and sensitive as his spiritual perceptiveness. It is to this unembarrassed sensitiveness that we owe half the delight which his work never fails to communicate. The infallible rhythm, the dignity and precision, the suave and sincere cadence of every sentence, the colour and music, that make of Newman's prose so perfect and exquisite a thing—all this were surely impossible but for that severe conscientiousness which controlled the immense natural gifts of Newman the writer. And it is this intellectual conscientiousness, this earnestness, that imparts to his prose so fine a quality of oral sincerity, and that gives to the written word the candour and persuasiveness of clear speech.

There are one or two passages here which suggest the almost grotesque contrast of Macaulay's famous and strident outburst, beginning: "There is not, and there never was on this earth, a work of human policy so well deserving of examination as the Roman Catholic Church." Newman's voice is not one which will strive or cry after this fashion. Yet neither is it a voice of soft allurements and langour. There are many passages in these selections glowing and eloquent with a passionate eloquence; the most devotional chapters are the most powerful and urgent in plea. Coventry Patmore affirms that the works of St. Augustine, St. Bernard, St. Francis of Sales, and a score of others like them, "contain an amount of substantial poetry, of imaginative insight into the noblest and loveliest reality, ten times greater than is to be found in all the poets of the past two thousand years put together." And there are few things in imaginative or devotional literature (we perceive no great gulf between the essentials of the two) so profoundly apprehensive, so extraordinarily intimate, as the extract given in this book under the heading, "The Mental Passion of Christ." It is well that the editor has included so much which is purely devotional, and which must assuredly appeal to sincere men of whatever creed. To say there are other things we should like to see included, is but to say that this is not a garnering

of Newman's "best things," but merely a very limited selection; and the possibly discontented will be but gainers if they are sent back to the treasurable chapters of say the "Apologia" or the "Idea of a University."

The other volume, of extracts from Archbishop Leighton, may possibly have the interest of a half-forgotten book, but certainly has the drawback of a tediously superfluous introduction. Leighton won Coleridge's warm eulogy, one passage of the "Commentary on St. Peter" being declared to contain "religion, the spirit; philosophy, the soul; and poetry, the body and drapery united; Plato glorified by St. Paul." Coleridge's fondness for seventeenth-century divines may be held responsible for this huge hyperbole; but still it is wonderful that he should have uttered this judgment on anyone but his more justly honoured Jeremy Taylor. For it was Taylor that wrote "Can a man bind a thought with chains, or carry imaginations in the palm of his hands?" And of this poetry, as of Donne's enkindling magnificence and music, Leighton has nothing, and little to compensate for the want of it. We wonder a little at the publication of this book, and can only assign it to the mysterious exigencies of a "series." Is it worth while to set forth as a "detached saying" of Leighton's that "We find very great odds betwixt stately palaces and poor cottages, betwixt a prince's robes and a beggar's cloak; but to God they are all one; all these petty differences vanish in comparison of his own greatness"? and to follow it with "A wary circumspect carriage becomes strangers, because they are most exposed to wrongs and accidents"?

The Church Handbook. By P. V. SMITH, LL.D., Chancellor of the Diocese of Manchester. (Wells, Gardner.)

THE title of this little book is misleading. "A Church Legal Handbook" would have been a truer description, for it is overburdened with technical matters of law. Clergy and churchwardens possess or require more complete works of reference. This is acknowledged in the Preface. We conclude, then, that this book is intended for the ordinary layman, who is, however, scarcely likely to trouble himself with the technical law of the Church, except when it concerns his own position and that of the incumbent in practical relation to the parish church and public worship. But it is just here that we notice some marked deficiencies.

For example: the Ornaments' Rubric is entirely passed over, and a misleading note on p. 43 would almost seem designed to give the impression that it did not exist.

In the notice of the little power now left to church vestries, we are not told—though this is a point of great importance—that the Easter vestry meeting has absolutely no legal right to deal with the accounts of moneys offered in the church collections.

In reference to the Church Training Colleges (p. 94), nothing is said of the recent Act which throws them open to Dissenters.

The second part of the book is chiefly an account of the legal position and local government of the various branches of the Anglican Church in other countries. Some very useful information is given about the constitution of voluntary churches, but we are surprised that nothing is said of so important a practical matter as their financial organisation.

Those who wish for a short general outline of the constitution and government of the Anglican Church strictly in relation to the law of the State will find it in this little work, but we do not think that there is anything to justify such a comprehensive title as "The Church Handbook." The legal development of the Church appears to be the lawyer's chief concern.

DR. STIGGINS: HIS VIEWS AND PRINCIPLES

A Series of Addresses delivered by that Gentleman to his Flock

NO. IV.

OUR last conversation was, I think, in the main devoted to the Drama; and I believe I succeeded in showing you that while we Free Churchmen object to the stage as it is at present conducted, we are so far from being hostile to the theatre, that one of our dearest wishes is to see it reformed, re-edified, and made an instrument of innocent and wholesome delight. In touching on the question of the drama, I could scarcely avoid dealing to some extent with literature, but before I go more fully into that great subject, I should like to say a word about an art which is not so generally in the public view; I mean sculpture.

Now I will say in the first place that there are certain aspects of this art which seem to me wholly laudable. When I pass through the public spaces and squares of our great metropolis and see the splendid statues of deceased statesmen—mostly, I am glad to say, of the Liberal persuasion—my heart thrills, and I feel that I am indeed a citizen of no mean country. Those stately figures, proud and erect, clad in no unmeaning or obsolescent finery, but in the homely trousers and tight-fitting frock-coat of the modern Englishman, go far to justify the sculptor's art, and we feel that the side-whiskers and nose of such a man as Cobden deserved to be commemorated in the enduring marble. Here, too, on that shelf, you will have noticed a bust of a distinguished fellow-minister: how the brow glows with thought, how well the artist has rendered the fine flowing locks, swept back, it seems, from the forehead in some sudden access of inspiration. Nay, there are humbler walks of the art which are at least innocent; the monkey in terra-cotta swinging on his rope will certainly afford harmless amusement, and perhaps may inculcate kindness to animals; while the head of the grinning negro boy may stimulate an interest in missionary enterprise.

But here, I think, we must draw the line. We may be held up to derision as prudens and fanatics, the oft-quoted motto, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*, may be hurled at our heads, we may be styled prurient, unclean, and I know not what else; but in spite of all clamour and all abuse we must say once for all that we cannot tolerate the making and the display of likenesses, in marble or bronze, in ivory or terra-cotta of the naked human form. There is a point at which all modern peoples divide the endurably coarse from the intolerably indecent and abominable. Every civilised man has a limit beyond which he will not permit himself to be carried, and, what is of at least equal importance, he has a limit beyond which he will not knowingly allow those innocences, ignorances and inexperience which are under his guardianship or control to travel. I say that the limit is overstepped when in defiance of every principle of modesty and decency our eyes are confronted with this spectacle of nudity. A nude picture is, indeed, bad and vicious in the extreme, but what is it to the sculptured form of a large, well-shaped woman, offending our eyes with the blatant realism of bronze or marble?

I was once being entertained by one of my deacons, a comparatively wealthy tradesman. He had moved into a larger house, and was kind enough to invite me to be present at the consequent festivity. Much of the furniture, ornaments, pictures, etc., was new, and to most of it no exception could be taken. But, on looking round the drawing-room I was horrified to perceive a group of statuettes in white marble; the statuettes in question being nothing more or less than the representations of three young women, not one of whom had on a stitch of clothing. Now, as it happened, my host had three daughters, all of them modest

and Christian girls, aged from sixteen to twenty-two. I had watched their progress in our Sunday School, and knew them well. So after supper I took Mr. Laskin aside, and said:

"I have a suggestion to make, which I think you will find calculated to add to the pleasure of the delightful evening we have all spent."

"What is it, doctor?" he said. "Let's hear about it, by all means."

"Well," I said, "I daresay you have heard of tableaux vivants, as they are called; the idea is that people should group themselves in such a way and in such costume as to suggest some well-known picture or event. Now, I propose that your three daughters, Minnie, Lizzie and Muriel, should take off all their clothes and see how well they can remind us of that pretty group I notice on the side-table."

You may imagine my host's consternation at this proposal, and it was some time before he was convinced that I had not fallen a victim to a sudden attack of mania. At last, however, my real meaning dawned upon him, and I could see that he was a good deal ashamed. The statuettes were no longer in the drawing-room on my next visit.

Would that I could persuade the world to act as promptly and as sensibly as good Mr. Laskin. Yet our Art Galleries and Museums, when they are not filled with the representations of Popish Virgins and Martyrs, teem with so-called works of art such as I have just described. I sometimes see ministers of religion, schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, even mothers and aunts, conducting bands of children round the establishments which the nation is wasteful and wicked enough to support; and I confess that I view such a sight with very great misgiving, or rather, with horror. How can that be right in art which is admittedly wrong and monstrous in life? If I am not to gaze at the nude and exposed forms of the lady Sunday School teachers, why in heaven's name should this great Protestant and Christian nation subsidise exhibitions which contain dozens of such forms, forms, moreover, which in many cases add to the offence of their nakedness by the representation of lascivious and alluring attitudes and gestures? I do not see that the antiquity of many of these objects is in any way in their favour, or excuses in the slightest degree their exhibition to the public. Indeed, I should have thought that in a professedly Christian country the pagan origin of these statues would be an additional argument in the contrary direction. But if we are to be told that we are to look with respect and admiration on every relic of antiquity, as such, then, of course, the path is clear, and we shall revive in our midst all the unspeakable abominations that in remote times defiled the earth. We shall see re-enacted the horrid orgies of Nero, Tiberius, and Heliogabalus; shameless processions will promenade our streets, and the last shreds of decency will depart from our nation. But, on one other hand, if we do not wish to see such a state of things, we shall turn a deaf ear to those who prate to us of antiquity, we shall decline to offer up the modesty of our young men and maidens at the shrine of heathen gods and goddesses. Show me a man who puts forward the plea of "art" in this connection; I will ask him in return how he would like to see the image of his mother in a state of nudity exposed to the gaze of grinning multitudes.

And now we must enter on the consideration of a question which is more complicated and perhaps of more importance; I mean the question of literature. Here I hardly think I need defend myself or my friends from the charge of detesting or despising an art which is and has been cultivated with such success by so many members of the Free Churches. The names of Milton and Emma Jane Worboise, of Bunyan and Hocking, of

Baxter and the Rev. E. P. Roe are, I think, sufficient testimony to the contrary. In poetry and fiction, in allegory and exposition we have taught the world the way of excellence, and we might be content with the testimony that such names as these afford. But we have done much more than this. Who can read such works as "John Halifax, Gentleman," "Adam Bede," and "Robert Elsmere"—to name the masterpieces of the last century—and not acknowledge that these great books are Puritan to the backbone? I can never look into certain of these pages without my mind being carried back to the days of my youth, when I worshipped in an old-fashioned church situated in a great manufacturing town in the north. It was not a beautiful and ornate building such as that to which my ministry is now given; for it bore on its grey stone front the inscription—Ebenezer, 1809—and in those days the sturdy Independents of the north were not much given to architectural adornment or æsthetic superfluity. No, it was a stern and rugged building, with plain windows and square doorway; but the memory of it is still sweet to me, and I shall never forget a series of sermons preached there, sermons about "Men who got on." The preacher took such examples as Jacob, David and Jehu; and he told the old-world stories with such simple directness in his plain Yorkshire speech that to me, at all events, they became no mere chronicles of dead and buried kings and patriarchs, but the living histories of living men, whose careers offered as important lessons as the careers of the good citizens of Leeds itself. One was taken from the semi-mythical, wholly Oriental atmosphere of the old records right into the life and bustle of modern streets; one heard the busy hum of machinery, the rattle of the loom, the tread of hurrying and eager feet. The preacher showed us that these old heroes of the Jewish nation were in fact very near to us, that then, as now, strict attention to business, to the business in hand, was bound to ensure success, in Leeds as in Jerusalem, in Yorkshire as in Syria. Even now I can remember the glow of satisfaction that seemed to radiate from the congregation when the good minister told us that Jacob "was a good Yorkshire lad at heart. He knew well enough if you want to get on you must start well, whether it's in God's service or in man's service. Jacob was not a man for compliments and soft sawder—he had no time for that any more than we have at Leeds—he had the pottage and the skins ready when they were wanted, and so he became the father of a great people. He stuck to his business, and so his business stuck to him." It was to such heart-lifting discourses as this that I listened in the old grey chapel thirty years ago, and still the preacher's tones, the faint aroma of hair-oil and peppermint, the listening faces of the sturdy, well-to-do congregation, and the sweet notes of the hymn return to me when I open the leaves of "John Halifax."

So it is in a greater or less degree with the works of the other writers I have mentioned. I should like to see on the title-pages of George Eliot's wonderful books three well-known words—*Beth-el I'll raise*. In formal theological belief, perhaps, she was severed from us; none the less does one gather from her pages the aroma of the good, old-fashioned "meeting-houses" of the Midlands, of placid, gentle, undulating scenery, of plain red-brick country towns, and above all of the Free Churchmen of the time and place, typical Englishmen and Englishwomen. It has been said that in all those books there is not a single idea; but I do not think that idealism offers many attractions to plain, Protestant England. When an Englishman wants to go from London to Manchester he does not take a balloon, he takes a ticket at Euston, content with his comfortable corner of the railway carriage, and not envying the adventurous aeronaut. True, the balloon is nearer the stars; but our traveller wishes to get to Manchester!

And so the tale goes on. English fiction of the worthier, greater kind owes a debt that can never be repaid to the influence of the Puritans and their descendants; even when its authors are not mechanically of us, spiritually they are very near to us indeed. Indeed, I know of books whose authors would have disclaimed, perhaps with indignation, both Puritan sources and Puritan influence, and yet these books are among the best representatives of our moral atmosphere. Miss Yonge, for example, was technically, I believe, a member of the Establishment, and her pages are here and there tainted with Anglican doctrine. And yet I know of no work which is more distinctly representative of our principles than hers. Those doctors and ministers in the country or in country towns, always with enormous families, the daily round of life under such conditions so faithfully and patiently described, without haste, without rest, are as good in their way as anything that George Eliot accomplished, and as remote from the fever-heated and unwholesome atmosphere of Romanism and Ritualism and "art" as can be well imagined. We smell no fumes of incense here, our eyes are not dazzled with the sheen of strange vestments, with the complexities of antique architecture—for I have always felt quite sure that the church built by Ethel at Cocks Moor would have been one in which, with few alterations, I could have gladly ministered. Even when the peculiarities of the Establishment are mentioned, we suffer no shock, no repulsion. Richard, it is true, takes "Orders," but he enters the church with the quiet piety and sense with which a good Free Churchman would open a shop; whatever Miss Yonge's personal opinions may have been we do not gather from her page that she conceived of this character as called "to the awful and tremendous hierurgy of the Unbloody Sacrifice"—to use the phrase of a dreadful book which I once opened. Again, it is true that there is a "Bishop" who "consecrates" the church at Cocks Moor; but I do not think the most bigoted anti-Episcopalian need be alarmed by his appearance. Here is no mitred, mystic figure, armed with powers from worlds beyond our ken, no claimant to an imaginary apostolic succession, no maker of "sacrificing priests"; but a quiet, kindly old gentleman, who says a few pleasant words to the children; as simple and as Christian a soul as any Sunday School Superintendent. Thank heaven for it, there is no sense of mystery in Miss Yonge's work, no dark oppression of the sacramental system in the air, nothing that might serve to cherish in the young mind the workings of a vague and fantastic imagination.

Without haste, without rest, must, as I said, have been the motto of this admirable writer. She has that sense of the importance of the infinitely little which is so characteristic of the highest genius; mark how patiently she traces the daily life of each of her child characters step by step, almost hour by hour, till we rise from the book with the delightful impression of having been inhabitants of Dr. May's nursery for many years. Not a detail is withheld; a childish complaint is an episode, and the escapade of a boy at school has in it all the matter of a great tragedy, while a small practical joke comes near to wrecking one of the young lives in which we grow so absorbed, till, as I say, we seem to hear the energetic screaming of the younger children, the pleasing bellow of the sailor-lad, the incessant (and most edifying) oratory of Ethel, and the grave voice of the good Richard. If I may parody a passage from a very different writer, Miss Yonge has painted for us an eternal tea-table, and the hissing urn seems to whisper that the tea is not too strong. And then note the landscape which serves as a background to these deeply interesting events. There are no bottomless vales and boundless floods, no shoreless seas or sacred rivers, no cedarn caves or Titan woods—none of the

distorted and unhealthy landscapes that presented themselves to the opium-drugged minds of the unhappy Edgar Poe and the ill-fated Coleridge. Just as I am sure that there were no magic casements in Dr. May's most comfortable residence, so I feel convinced that one might seek in vain within a large radius from the agreeable country town in which he practised for anything remotely resembling fairy lands forlorn. No, we seem to look from solid red-brick houses over placid meadows, watered by gentle and sluggish streams, bordered by well-trimmed hedges with all the gates and stiles in excellent repair. The wildest place mentioned in the book is Cocksnoor; and one understands the exquisite symbolism by which this ragged and unkempt heath stands for the wild, strange impulses and dreams which sometimes haunt and disturb the best of us, which we are to trim and tame at any cost, at any sacrifice.

I have dwelt perhaps too long on a work which has always fascinated me by its truth and its simplicity, but I have demonstrated, at all events, my admiration for really fine literature, and I think I have shown you that a Free Church minister is by no means the tasteless boor that his enemies have pictured. Now, I am sorry to say that my task will be a less pleasant one; for it is my duty to declare that much which passes under the name of literature should, in my opinion, be ruthlessly suppressed. I will *not* allow that perfection in the presentation makes the nature of the thing presented of little consequence; I will *not* allow that the deadliest poisons may be vended openly so long as the phials containing them are curiously and "artistically" shaped; I will *not* allow that venomous serpents should be encouraged in our back gardens for the sake of the iridescent colours which their scales display. There are those who would suffer putrid and stagnant water to collect in our highways for the pleasure of observing the green scum which gathers over such places; but against such madness as this I, at least, will never cease to raise my voice in horror and detestation.

And I must say that, on the whole, modern criticism has taken this view, which I maintain to be the only possible one. After all, even the most enraged mediævalists, the most atrabilious opponents of every kind of progress are obliged to confess that the present age is an ethical one. It is by the standard of ethics that we form our judgment of most things. Dogma may be on the wane, for as the worthy ex-president of the Wesleyan Conference so truly affirmed, dogma is not practical, and the twentieth century is nothing if not practical. As Dr. Forrest, a notable example of the fine scholarship and literary culture of Presbyterianism, has observed in a recent and stimulating work:

"It is preposterous to call a State religious according as it does or does not make a formal profession of religion; for example, to call Spain Christian and America godless, as if, so long as the dogmatic of Christianity is preserved, it does not much matter about the ethic."

Considering what we know of the ethical code of America in social, commercial, and political affairs, considering the severity with which any infringement of this high moral standard is punished, especially in the Southern States, it seems to me that the illustration is almost too extravagant for Dr. Forrest's purpose, but it serves my turn, inasmuch as it insists on the supreme importance of ethics. Ethics, of course, are the natural development of a free commercial state; we are not surprised therefore to note that in the Dark Ages, when the Feudal System and the Church of Rome held down the world under a terrorism of blood and fire, there were, in our sense, no morals at all. But in commerce morals are essential, trade could not exist for a day without them, and the great commercial systems which have transformed the world from an armed camp into a peaceful factory would perish, unless sustained by a lofty ethical basis.

The world of to-day, then, is peculiarly and essentially a moral world; there is no doubt that if a Syrian Christian of the first century could revisit this earth and compare the London and Chicago of to-day with Jerusalem of old he would be astonished at the contrast. And the moral code which governs us is itself peculiar to our age. No doubt it represents through a process of growth and development the ethics of the New Testament, but this identity is not to be discovered on the surface. Nor need this surprise us: the gigantic oak tree bears no resemblance to the acorn, and the splendid blooms in our gardens are very dissimilar from the tiny grains which we entrusted to the soil. Who, without minute and delicate observation, could identify the splendid butterfly, clad in all the colours of the rainbow, with a loathsome caterpillar crawling on the ground? So, it must not surprise us if we find in the Inspired Volume that deliberately to hurt another man's feelings is denounced to be a most capital and deadly sin, that poverty is held up to our admiration as a highly-privileged state, that the possessor of a flourishing business and an immense fortune is considered as occupying much the same position as that of a man on the brink of a frightful precipice, that the saving of money and a careful consideration of future contingencies are regarded as both imbecile and wicked. We must not be surprised again when we find the Master studiously shunning the company of what we should call the respectable classes, and associating with persons, male and female, whom we should describe as drunkards, tavern-haunters, wastrels, and "Bohemians."

At the same time, I need not point out to you that this is not precisely the code of to-day. We pride ourselves on our commercial prosperity, we do not wish to imitate the Popish "saints" in their superstitious views of poverty, we regard a successful and wealthy business man as a highly enviable and laudable individual, we applaud economy and prudent foresight in business matters, and, speaking for the Free Churches, I need scarcely say that we are devoted adherents of the great cause of Temperance. With the utmost stretch of my imagination, I cannot conceive of a minister of any respectable denomination drinking in a common public-house, with actors, painters, authors, or musicians, who, I am afraid, are rarely men of very sober habits; nor can I for a moment admit that it would be possible for myself, or for any of my brethren, to cultivate the society of the unhappy women who have been branded with the shameful stigma of the Divorce Court.

But ours, as I have observed, is an ethical age, and I cannot sufficiently praise the manner in which the chief literary critics of the time have absorbed the great moral principles which are, as I have said, the backbone of the modern commercial state. I do not know any of these gentlemen personally, I am sorry to say, but if we may judge from their writings, it must be, indeed, a blessed privilege to have their acquaintance, to imbibe, as from the fountain head, those precious streams of high ethical instruction which must well out always from their lips. And they are by no means the mere pedants of the dull old days, the dry scholars with their quaint interest in purely literary theories, with their puzzle-headed and minute knowledge of antique and dusty tomes such as Chaucer and Shakespeare, learned in occult and useless lore of poesy, gravely discoursing of sonnets and epics, of rhymes and alliterations, acquainted, very likely, with the languages of ancient Greece and Rome. No; the modern critic is far from being of this grim old fellowship; as witness Mr. Arnold Bennett, who says in the columns of a great Liberal newspaper:—

"Money talks. A litterateur who, having made a profound study of fiction, can tell you the colour of the

dress in which Charlotte Brontë was married will command a higher remuneration (because he interests more people) than the critic who can but chatter amiably of the differences between the philosophy of Browning and the philosophy of Algernon Charles Swinburne."

This is sound sense, not literary pedantry; and it is a combination of sound commercial sense with a high moral standard that has made our English criticism what it is; the resolute guardian of our homes, determined at all hazards to ward off the prowling bands of so-called "stylists," "artists," "mystics," and all other dabblers in the dark caverns of impurity and disease. I am a father myself, and it has always pleased me to think of our English critics as fathers also, as writing their profound and yet attractive essays in the midst of a laughing throng of merry, happy children; pausing now and then, perhaps, and gaining inspiration and (who knows?) ideas from the cheerful prattle of the little ones. I love to think of these men who guide the great destinies of English Literature as interested in all the details of innocent child-life, as more learned, perhaps, in the shape and uses of the tiny garments of extreme infancy than in the arid history of the masterpieces, as taking a greater interest in Nelly's doll than in the author of "Don Quixote," as giving greater thought to the quarrel between Phillis and Jacky (who is always naughty), than to the debates of the Tassoists and Ariostoists. Indeed, I feel sure that this fancy of mine must correspond to the truth, for in no other way can I explain the enthusiasm for the cause of youth which has so often edified me in the writings of these excellent gentlemen. Only fathers could identify themselves so absolutely with the childish mind, only fathers could perceive with such sure instinct the weak places, as it were, in the nursery wall, and appreciate the need of guarding against the latent taste for decadent literature so prevalent in infantine minds. This principle—that no book should be written or published which may, conceivably, do some harm to some young person or other—is a great one; it has been the salvation of our simple English shelves, and I hope that our criticism will always and without flinching maintain this splendid canon—that the book which is not fit to enter the nursery and the schoolroom is not fit to exist at all. The field of the novelist and the poet, like that of the playwright, is an open space, a Board School playground, if you please, and I contend that the man who would defile and degrade such a paradise with his grinning death's-heads, his grotesque and frightful gargoyle, is a villain indeed.

It fills me with amazement and horror when I read in the writings of authors (who are safe enough where modern work is concerned) a kind of glib, matter-of-fact acceptance of some of the most monstrous productions of past ages—on the ground that these abominations are "works of genius," "works of art," and I know not what else. What a monstrous inconsistency lies in the practice of forcing growing lads to acquire a knowledge of the obscenities of Aristophanes, a writer who would most deservedly be sent to gaol if he lived in our days, whom to read would spell the severest punishment, if he had written, not in Greek, but in plain English. Is this the way to breed English gentlemen, I ask; are we teaching our boys to become earnest and profitable Christians by forcing down their throats this filth of heathendom, this Athenian sewage? No one, surely, can sincerely think that vile and corrupting garbage is any the better because it was written more than two thousand years ago. Again, I say, it is not to be wondered at, if to the Free Churchman the word "classic" implies foul and deliberate nastiness. And yet, the very men who are most prompt in correcting any tendency of this kind in the work of to-day are with the next breath ready to applaud the filth of some scoundrelly heathen, to smack their lips over some new

edition of his plays or poems, and to congratulate the editor on his notes—notes elucidating matter of which a Hottentot would be ashamed. The case is much the same with writers who were at all events professing Christians.

But I pass these over and come to the most notorious instance of all, the universally read, the almost idolised Shakespeare. Nay; I am quite aware of the obloquy I shall encounter, I know that a kind of fetish worship has gathered round the name of this dramatist, that it is accounted a heresy to mention his works save in terms of the most extravagant praise. And I must allow that Shakespeare has written many great and admirable lines; there are whole pages, indeed, in his plays which may be read both with pleasure and profit, for the beauty of expression, the moral lesson, and the fidelity to life. Such for example are the famous soliloquy beginning "To be, or not to be," and the hardly less famous moralisings of the Melancholy Jacques. But we purchase such gems as these too dearly when we consider what Shakespeare is as a whole, that throughout his works are scattered many passages of an extremely indecent nature, that his language is by no means such as we should tolerate in our drawing-rooms, and that again and again he appeals to some of the worst passions of Englishmen.

How vain is it for us to preach the wickedness of war from every pulpit if with our next breath we bid our children study such a play as *Henry V.* We proclaim aloud at every opportunity the blessings of peace, we denounce militarism in high places and in low, we clamour for the reduction of the bloated armaments which suck the life-blood from the English People, and keep the rest of the world in a continual state of irritation and alarm. We resent such festivals as Empire Day, we banish the Union Jack from our schools, we hate and dread the very mention of conscription, and by our ridicule of the "Rifle Club" and similar schemes we do our very best to render our country defenceless in the event of invasion. Military habits—the smartness, the rigid carriage of the body, the prompt obedience to a superior—all these we consistently look down upon and deride, for they are at once provocative and contrary to the principles of democracy. Nay, as I have said, we have found it our duty in almost every case in which a dispute has arisen between Englishmen and those of another nation to declare our own people absolutely in the wrong, to paint them as a race of savage, sordid, and barbarian robbers. When Englishmen have won victories we allude to them as "brutal massacres of unarmed men," when Englishmen have been defeated we point out that our own race is effete, rotten, cowardly, and contemptible in every respect, and that the leaders of our armies are too imbecile to fight successfully against men, whatever their prowess may be against women and children. We have done all this, I say, and we crown our work by putting into our children's hands a book that reeks of Jingoism, Imperialism, and Patriotism; that "mafficks" on every other page, that sings the glories of all the ruffianly kings who bore rule in the Dark Ages, and never fails to applaud their most disreputable military adventures! And when to vices such as these we join the immeasurable contempt that the flunkey-soul of Shakespeare felt for the People, when we remember the outrageous and insulting manner in which the Democracy is treated in *Coriolanus* and *Julius Cæsar*; above all, when we read that most injurious and shameful attack on the great Cade in *Henry VI.*, Part II., the measure of our just indignation brims over, and we Free Churchmen reluctantly but decisively announce to the world that Shakespeare must go. A few copies of the Works may possibly be allowed to be kept in the strong rooms of the County Council, and may be shown to such scholars

as can satisfy the official custodians that their curiosity is harmless; but the man who by a kind of malignant prophecy at once defiled the memory of the martyr in the people's cause, and contrived in doing so shamelessly to caricature and degrade the policy of the great Liberal Party of to-day, shall be no guide for our children, for those Liberal citizens of to-morrow, whom we have rescued from parson and from priest.

ARTHUR MACHEN.

LIVES OF GOETHE

GOETHE seems to have been specially unfortunate in his biographers. G. H. Lewes was a scholar, a man of bright personality and considerable keenness of insight, and yet he is ever making the reader conscious of his utter ineffectiveness as a biographer of Goethe. Carlyle understood German better than he did French, but the little that he has left us as an appreciation of Goethe is inferior even to his story of the French Revolution, whether judged as a picture or as an analysis of cause and effect. "Not in the least a spooney," Lewes quotes Carlyle as having exclaimed of Goethe, and if by "spooney" Carlyle meant sentimentalist, that is precisely what the author of "Werther" and of "Tasso" undoubtedly was from the beginning to the end of his career as a writer. In fact, there has never been a German poet who was not a sentimentalist ("spooney" is really too idiotic a word to repeat). That the English critics and biographers of Goethe should have failed to understand him is no more surprising than that the German critics should have in an equal degree failed to grasp the real significance of Shakespeare; but it is strange that all the German biographies of Goethe should be so unsatisfactory. The probable explanation is that the German "Litteratur-und-Kunst Kritiker" is nearly always for his sins a "Herr Professor," as was the case with Albert Bielschowsky, whose second volume of "Goethe's Life," translated by Professor William Cooper, is now published by Messrs. Putnam. Mr. Cooper is an American, and he writes "American," or, at any rate, a dialect of the Anglo-Saxon tongue, which is often forcible and picturesque, but is quite as often not pure English. As to Herr Bielschowsky, one is constantly being reminded by him of Balzac's description of the German in "Le Cousin Pons":

Pons et Schmucke avaient en abondance, l'un comme l'autre, dans le cœur et dans le caractère, ces enfantillages de sentimentalité qui distinguent les Allemands: comme la passions des fleurs, comme l'adoration des effets naturels, qui les porte à planter de grosses bouteilles dans leurs jardins pour voir en petit le paysage qu'ils ont en grand sous les yeux; comme cette prédisposition aux recherches qui fait faire à un savant germanique cent lieues dans ses guêtres pour trouver une vérité qui le regarde en riant, assise à la marge du puits, sous le jasmin de la cour; comme enfin, ce besoin de prêter une signification psychique aux riens de la création, qui produit les œuvres inexplicables de Jean-Paul Richter, les griseries imprimées d'Hoffmann, et les gardes-fous in-folio que l'Allemagne met autour des questions les plus simples, creusées en manière d'abîmes, au fond desquels il ne se trouve qu'un Allemand.

Goethe and Bielschowsky stand towards one another in much the same relation as did Pons and Schmucke, with this difference, that Schmucke's adoration of his divinity was associated with a modest abnegation of self, which is unfortunately lacking to the German critic. Most of his second volume is taken up with tiresome analyses of "Iphigenie" and "Tasso," in which, true to the German instinct of "walking a hundred leagues in his gaiters to find a truth that is laughing at him from the edge of the well under the jasmin in the back-garden," he discovers all kinds of immaterial motives in Goethe's private life to explain the most triumphant achievements of his imagination. On the first page we read:

There can be no doubt that at first the desire for the love, later for the possessions of Charlotte von Stein, determined the fundamental

tone of the dramas, which was further strengthened for Elpinor, Iphigenie, and Tasso by the death of his dearly beloved and only sister.

This determination on the part of Herr Bielschowsky to trace the great inspiration of Germany's foremost poet to the details of his domestic surroundings makes him write in unfair and snobbish terms of Frau Goethe, of whom Goethe himself wrote to Herder at the commencement of his liaison with that beautiful young woman who was then Fräulein Christiane Vulpius:

I willingly confess that I love the girl passionately.

But, says the Herr Professor,

this declaration was either due to the over-valuation of a rather strong, momentary feeling of longing, or, what is more probable, was an emphatic reassertion of his interest in Christiane for the express purpose of commending her and her little son as warmly as possible to the protection of Herder and his wife.

Anything more improbable or unlike the generous character of Goethe can hardly be imagined. Herder and his wife, with that diabolical meanness which is so characteristic of narrow provincial life in Germany, did their very best to bring about the social ostracism of the poor girl at Weimar, in which they were naturally aided and abetted by the disappointed and temporarily discarded Frau von Stein. Goethe, however, though it was later in life that he learnt to judge the moral character of his friend Herder at its real value, was quite capable of taking care of himself and the mother of his son; and the fact that he married her seventeen years later shows that his love for her was something much stronger than a momentary feeling of longing. She seems, indeed, to have been the ideal artist's wife, beautiful and simple-minded, and making no attempt to play the rôle of Egeria or to attribute to herself the inspiration of his genius. Herr Bielschowsky describes this as the "spiritual solitariness" of Goethe, which reminds the writer of a remark made by a German lady in his hearing as to the superiority of the ladies of Berlin over those of Paris: "Die Deutsche Damen können Alles mitreden!" Frau Goethe's chief social fault she seems to have shared with the Duke of Wellington at the Court of Louis XVIII., where, according to the Vicomte de Reiset, "il n'avait aucune conversation."

But if Herr Bielschowsky be correct in his theory that Goethe's "Iphigenie" is the reflection of his own domestic story, then it is strange indeed that he should insist on comparing this play with the original "Iphigenia" of Euripides, much to the disadvantage of the latter. That Goethe's drama is essentially German in characterisation and tone is obvious, and for this reason alone any comparison with the Greek masterpiece is patently absurd. Herr Bielschowsky does not even hesitate to ascribe superior stagecraft to the German play. "It is a stroke of genius," he says, "on the part of Goethe to bring about a separate meeting between Iphigenie and each of the two companions.

In Euripides, on the other hand, Orestes and Pylades always appear together, like the Siamese twins . . . But when Orestes is alone on the stage, where is Pylades? Behind the scenes of the Grand Ducal Theatre at Weimar presumably. But what possible application has such a criticism as this to the Greek theatre? The German critic's initial mistake is in seeking to establish a rivalry between these two splendid productions of human genius separated from one another by so many centuries.

The two "Iphigenies" which might be fruitfully considered side by side are Goethe's and Racine's. Goethe was to a far greater extent than the German critics are disposed to admit a figure of the eighteenth century. If Frederick the Great could have foreseen in what direction the genius of Goethe would develop after such *péchés de jeunesse* as Goetz von Berlichingen and Werther had been confessed and atoned

for, he would certainly not have condemned him for imitating the savage Shakespeare. The immense debt which Goethe owed to the French classical writers he implicitly admitted, at the prime of his career, in his praise of Moliere, of whose plays he made a point of reading at least one every year, and when he wrote the following self-revealing eulogy of Voltaire:

Depth, genius, magnetism, taste, reason, sensibility, philosophy, elevation, originality, naturalness, wit, delicate, facility, flexibility, justness, finesse, abundance, variety, fecundity, warmth, magic, charm, grace, strength, the glance of an eagle, vast understanding, rich instruction, excellent tone, urbanity, vivacity, delicacy, correctness, purity, clearness, elegance, harmony, brilliance, rapidity, gaiety, pathos, sublimity, universality, perfection in fact—there you have Voltaire. . . . Voltaire will always be considered the greatest man in literature of modern times, and perhaps even of all the centuries; every variety of talent, all the glories of genius, all the powers of thought.

Could Frederick himself have said more, or would he have said as much?

There is, in fact, a singular resemblance in the mental, moral, and social lives of the Hermit of Herney, and the poet-philosopher of Weimar. Both were patronised by German sovereigns with whom they ultimately fell out. Both were absorbed by universal activities, and aimed at encyclopædic knowledge. The scientific studies of Goethe were not less futile if they were decidedly less grotesque than Voltaire's investigations into the weight of heat. If Goethe thought that he had dethroned Newton, Voltaire's dearest wish, on the contrary had been to elevate the English philosopher to the highest pedestal in the realms of scientific and philosophic fame. Each played an important political and diplomatic rôle. Their characters were singularly alike so far as vivacity and brilliance of intelligence were concerned. Goethe had a strong leaven of sentimentality lacking to Voltaire, and one cannot imagine the German poet enriching himself by usury, and thus amassing the enormous wealth which distinguished Voltaire from the vast majority of poets and philosophers. But while Goethe was undoubtedly a great precursor, and assisted, a transcendent figure, at the birth of the nineteenth century, his influence upon modern times can only be justly appreciated after a proper estimate has been formed of the influence of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries upon him. This is precisely what the biographers of Goethe, German and others, have so far failed to do, and Herr Bielschowsky has proved himself to be no exception to the rule. The late G. H. Lewes denounced Menzel for contending that Goethe, whom Lewes calls "the greatest poet of modern times," had "no genius, but only talent, and that the miracle of his work lies in their style—a certain adroitness of representation." "To me," says Lewes, "he (Menzel) appears radically incompetent to appreciate a poet." But this is precisely the difficulty with Lewes ("Goethe's Life at Weimar." Greening). It is more than likely that the classical influences of the eighteenth century on Goethe's genius, which Menzel felt without being able to define, were the cause of his denying to Goethe a place among the poets of the first rank. In any case, Goethe would be best judged by a poet. Professors like the late Herr Bielschowsky, who patronise and fondle him, adulate and scold him, blue-pencil and red-pencil his masterpieces, are incapable of judging his poetry, and if they must write his biography, they would do better to sacrifice their mania for criticising the work of art to the more rational business of recording the historic fact. When will a poet give us a Life of Goethe?

ROWLAND STRONG.

THE REAL ERNEST DOWSON

LAST summer I came upon a criticism of the poems of Ernest Dowson by Mr. Talcott Williams in an American magazine *The Book News Monthly*, which ended with the words: "Such are the poems of Ernest

Dowson. Born in 1867, he died in 1900, having thrown away his life in such reckless and foolish dissipation as comes to few—Dowson had the best of life before him, and he chose the worst. Nor is there aught which furnishes excuse for this in the brief life prefaced by Arthur Symonds." As I considered this unfortunate, but natural, misunderstanding of one of the most distinguished lyric poets of our generation, I was forced to the conclusion that one of the worst misfortunes which befell that most unfortunate poet was that he found his biographer in Mr. Symonds. Mr. Symonds's upbringing rendered him quite unfit to understand Ernest Dowson; it prevented him from seeing things in their true proportions. He saw London literary life always through the scarlet spectacles of the escaped Nonconformist; and the peccadillos of its youth bulked as big to his unworldly eyes as the sins of the Borgias. Excellent a critic as he may be of Dowson's poems, he had neither the knowledge nor the experience to understand Dowson the man. He has succeeded in presenting one of the most charming and distinguished spirits of our time as a rather disagreeable wastrel.

He was not even sufficiently intimate with Dowson to perform the task properly. His facts are actually wrong: Dowson was not the possessor of a dock, but had a share in it, and was manager of it; he did not feel "strangely at home" in that squalid part of the East End, but always made haste, a daily haste, to get out of it as fast as he could; Dowson was a gentleman, and never afflicted with a "morbid shyness." Such statements as that he loved the sordid, desired all the enchantments of the senses, that he was not a dreamer, but a child clamouring for the impossible, are equally inaccurate; but they help to justify Mr. Talcott Williams of his absurd impression of Ernest Dowson as a rather disagreeable wastrel.

Dowson was one of the first friends I made, when, after my return to England from the West Indies, I came to London to attempt the adventure of literature. I did not know him at Oxford, for I must have been a year or two senior to him. Our friendship grew quickly, and for a couple of years we spent on the average four evenings a week together. We used to meet at about six at the Cock, in Shaftesbury Avenue, where I would find him half in a dream, with a glass of absinthe before him, writing his delightful verse on a scrap of notepaper or the inside of an envelope. He needed the absinthe, for he suffered from the constitutional languor of the frail, and was besides tired by his uncongenial work at the dock. He would talk fitfully of literature or the *British Public*—a great figure in those days—or our friends till seven. Then we would betake ourselves to Poland, as we called the restaurant where dwelt "the little lady of his heart." A fresh, young girl—he had first made her acquaintance there as a child—of a cheerful, healthy spirit, she attracted him by the charm of her innocent youth, a charm to which he was peculiarly susceptible, and by the charm of her contrast to his frailer self. She was hardly the creature of his poems, but a sufficing structure for a poet to embellish with his fancies.

Poland was hardly what Mr. Kipling would call the restaurant of a dream—it had not even a wine licence; and there was a lamentable absence of plush. But it was suited to the means of those attempting serious literature; and the simple food it provided was wholesome. An actor or two—the successful of them dine at the Carlton now—an editor, two or three writers and barristers made up the circle; and till half-past nine, over our ale and coffee, we would talk furiously and disputatiously about literature, art, and morals, seldom forgetting to say a few kind words about the *British Public*. Then, leaving Dowson to play a game of cards with the little lady of his heart—I think those

games were the great delight of the child's wearisome day—we went on to the Café Royal or a tavern, where Dowson joined us later, and continued our discussions. Often we talked of joining one of the clubs which we now adorn; but an honest dread of the club bore, so certain to spoil our talk, held us back. Tavern talk seemed less interrupted by irrelevant persons. The evening ended always at the Crown, the meeting-place of men of letters, artists, social reformers, critics, and comparatively affluent young journalists like Mr. Symons, a circle brightened by the presence of such members of the ballet as had the faces and intelligence to make that presence grateful to it.

At those feasts, whether of steaks or of wit, Dowson was always the dreamer; his eyes were always a little bemused; always he seemed to awake, to withdraw himself from some aloof world of the imagination to come into our talk. Awakened he talked well, but he only took the trouble to talk much on his own subjects, literature and beauty. He was, above all things, a dreamer; that was his essential quality; when Mr. Symons missed it, he missed Dowson altogether. Certainly he was never a clamorous child. I have heard him rail at the world for a breath—who does not?—but he never clamoured for anything it could give him; he had too much of the dreamer's contempt for it. I think he was happiest in the remote Breton villages, whither he now and again withdrew himself, from which he wrote his most delightful letters. They used to give me the impression that the world went well with him there—as well, at any rate, as it ever could go with him.

At the closing of the Crown at night, either he would hurry off to catch a train to his loathed East End underworld, or he would walk with me to far Vauxhall, where, after some talk, he would sleep in my easy chair; for he had the cat's happy aptitude for sleeping where night found him. I remember that our breakfasts were silent meals: I never want to say anything at breakfast; it was a want Dowson shared. After breakfast he would hurry off to his dock.

I once went to lunch with him at that dock, and I remember well and uneasily the dreary house—Quilp might have lived in it—looking out upon the chilly water. Three times I went at night; once to translate with him a volume of French memoirs in eight hours, as fast as we could in turn drive the pen to the other's dictation. Once I dragged him back from town after dinner to explore the dock quarter at night. That night at any rate that quarter was very like Bagdad: strange people were abroad to make our acquaintance, and we had a fantastic time of it. Once again at night I went down to the dock, and helped him carry away the possessions he cherished. They were very few, mostly books; we carried them quite easily. I never knew why we shot that moon with so romantic a secrecy; I do not believe there was any need for it, since it was partly his own house. He cast the dust of the loathed East End off his feet, and never saw it again.

The world never could go very well with Ernest Dowson. He was not of it. To his strong, delicate sense of beauty, for ever ruffled by the modern squalor, was added a frailty of constitution, the consumptive taint, which oppressed him with a languor which liquor alone could relieve. Now and again during the two years of our intimacy he would have drinking bouts. Later they grew more frequent as he grew frailer, and the need of stimulant more pressing. His strained nerves demanded it more imperiously. But for weeks together he would drink wine and beer and keep sober enough. But naturally a couple of whiskies and soda had as an intoxicating an effect on a man of his nerves as three-quarters of a bottle on the

average man. Liquor was his anodyne, too, no less than his stimulant. When life forced itself into his dream too roughly, his usual gentle impatience with it rose to a feverish irritation, and for that irritation he sought the only remedy he knew. Unfortunately, too, whisky was a literary fashion, set by Henley. It was an appalling fashion, which some of the younger men of letters followed with a kind of foolish schoolboy bravado. I have seen three of the finest minds I have known drown in whisky. As long as I could keep Dowson to wine or beer he was sober enough. When the acuter craving drove him to whisky, and whisky to women, there was little to be done. Sometimes, indeed, I would get him to my rooms, sobering him up by the walk. Sometimes I had to leave him to that Providence which makes children and drunken men its special care. It looked after him. One thing I will say, unlike the true wastrels I have known, he never took any pride in these outbursts. He rather hated them.

Ernest Dowson was a dreamer with the finest and most delicate sense of beauty. He was an exile in this world; and very wisely he lived aloof, as far as it would let him, in the beautiful world of his dreams, which he has now without doubt inherited. Of externals he was utterly heedless. He did not love the sordid at all; but he did pay as much attention to his appearance as that stern Englishman, Dr. Johnson. He was simply not concerned with the world; and I think that his wonderful, gentle charm came from this attitude to life. He never cared enough for this world to pose before it; he had the charm of perfect simplicity and sincerity, the charm of an extraordinary gentleness. He was always just Ernest Dowson; and it was a delightful person to be.

The truth of his soul is best expressed in the words he gave me to write opposite his name in a curious birthday book I keep:

The small things of life are odious to me, and the habit of them enslaves me; the great things of life are eternally attractive to me, but indolence and fear put them by.

EDGAR JEPSON.

FICTION

A Lindsay o' the Dale. By A. G. HALES. (Fisher Unwin, 6s.)

MR. HALES'S story of Australian bush life in the convict days is graphic and exciting. Whatever may be its merits from a literary point of view, the author can be congratulated on having written a story that will carry his readers from start to finish with a rush, and leave them sorry that it is not longer. And that is a test that the majority of novels would fail to pass. Kate Killowen, the narrator of "*A Lindsay o' the Dale*," is one of a family, drawn from Irish and Scottish sources, which leads the life strenuous in a most determined manner. Inspector Vernon, a police tyrant, insults Kate's mother, the outraged husband horsewhips him, and thus begins a battle which ends, Hamlet fashion, in the deaths of all the principals. When Killowen and his two sons take to the bush they preform deeds of valour and daring that almost make the reader gasp. Mail-coaches are held up, regiments of police attacked and defeated, all the difficulties presented by Nature overcome, and as soon as one of the gang loses his horse—it is the finest in the world, otherwise it would not be a bushranger's!—in the next chapter he picks up a better animal! Vernon's perseverance in persecuting the family provides the author with plenty of

opportunities for testing the capabilities of his brood of fighters, and if it is not easy for the lay mind to conjure up the spectacle of half a dozen men holding up a whole town, no doubt that sort of thing was possible fifty years ago, when bushrangers of the Robin Hood brand found many friends in the ranks of the more prosaic of the population. The Killowens rob the rich and vulgar in order to give to the poor, and in this way Mr. Hales contrives to keep all the sympathy on the side of the much-persecuted family. It would require a column of figures to express adequately the number of murders, mad rides—and other feats of horsemanship—narrow escapes, and eccentric enterprises with which this novel is crowded, but those who like to have their blood stirred are advised to buy "A Lindsay o' the Dale." It will more than satisfy any craving for the sensational. Perhaps the very pessimistic ending will be found disappointing; it is a shock to read of the deaths of the whole band of heroes with the exception of the last recruit, Kenneth Killowen, and even in his case we are informed that he becomes a maniac and drags Inspector Vernon about with him in the wilds. This is the family vengeance on their persecutor. Mr. Stanley L. Wood—without whom no Australian story is complete—provides a frontispiece, and juvenile readers of "A Lindsay o' the Dale" will certainly wish there were more.

Mortal Men. By JESSIE LECKIE HERBERTSON. (William Heinemann, 6s.)

THE setting of this story is nebulous. We are told next to nothing of Miss Rean's school, and we can only conclude from the conversation of her school-marks that it was one of little consequence. These young persons talk like kitchen-maids and behave like the hoydens in a Restoration drama. It does not matter much which man comes in their way, they will hurry to throw themselves at his head. They dance with drapers' assistants, they think one of them has an elegant figure and wonder if he wears stays, they eat four ices and have indigestion. "Mr. Philip shared one of mine," said Lilian Medlicott. "He wanted to taste it, he said; he put his lips just where mine had been." We are fascinated by this picture of the ice, because we have often watched little boys at an ice-vendor's barrow. "Mr. Philip" was the brother of the head-mistress, and when he comes to stay at the school, she hopes her young ladies will remember that there is no need for them to see any more of him than is absolutely necessary. This seems rude until you remember what the young ladies were like. "You'll have Mr. Rean quite close to you upstairs," says Lilian Medlicott to Jessica; "he is to have the bedroom beyond yours. He'll pass your door as he goes by at night. Perhaps you'll have adventures in the empty rooms up there . . . it would be more exciting than you can think . . ." After this, no one can be surprised to find Jessica, a few chapters further on, in Mr. Philip's room, kissing his coats, and yet a little later departing with him for a honeymoon on the South coast. "We are virtually married," he said to her when she became a little uneasy about her position. There was not the shadow of a reason why they should not have been actually married, but Philip, who had negro lips and a thick-set figure, thought he might tire of Jessica as he had tired of other women; while Jessica believed on the slightest evidence that he had a wife already. It really did not matter much. Philip was an offensive creature from beginning to end, and as for Jessica, if it had not been Philip, it would have been John or James. When we leave her she is, by courtesy, a widow, but Philip's successor is holding her to him. She was, says the successor, "the spendthrift who had wasted a big emotion on a spurious joy." We should describe her differently.

DRAMA

LADY FREDERICK

THE name of one great actress—a perfect artist—was on everybody's lips on Saturday night. "What a part for her," we all said, "and how marvellous she would have been in it. Why is she not?" But, really, Miss Ethel Irving made us forget our regrets and give ourselves up wholly to her wonderful talent and charm, till, by the end of the play, she had become for us the one and only Lady Frederick, and Lady Frederick had become Miss Ethel Irving. It was a delicious evening, full of delight from start to finish. The success of a first night can generally be gauged by the *entr'actes*. On this occasion during the intervals we were all gay and good-humoured, at our very best, pleased to see our friends, and, infected with the author's vitality, saying our brightest things. It was not a perfect play from the technical point of view, there were "scenes" which had nothing to do with the main action, there were stage tricks which have served before. But it was a perfect piece of work, because what the author did he did deliberately, "of malice afore-thought," and he got the greatest possible effect out of his efforts. He was completely, splendidly successful.

The story details how Lady Frederick Berolles, an Irish widow with a personality and a brogue irresistible in force and charm, is wooed by the young Marquis of Mereston, whose mother is horrified at the prospect of her son marrying someone whose escapades have given a salacious world a just cause for criticism. Lady Mereston's brother, an old adorer who, though he had once been made ridiculous by Lady Frederick, still admires her, joins with his sister in trying to prevent the marriage. For this purpose they plot to bring up her past against her. Lady Frederick is flattered by the young man's devotion, though she does not really intend to marry him; but she wishes to refuse him in her own way, and resents bitterly the attempt to force her to give him up. She prefers to show her complete mastery of the situation and then to retire gracefully with all the honours of the victory while she declines its fruits. It is all the more magnanimous of her in that she is desperately in need of money to save her own and her brother's honour, when the alternative of not getting it is ruin or marriage with a blackmailing gentleman who holds her bills. But she is not one to worry, and she comes through her troubles with reckless confidence and a genius for getting her own way.

In the course of her fencing with the Mereston family we see her delivering her deadliest thrust with the sweetest of smiles and the most perfect good temper, but there comes a time when Lady Mereston brings a charge against her in the presence of her son and brother. It is a great moment. Lady Frederick explains the matter with a perfection of simplicity and truth, a pathetic dignity which convinces all of us, except the (perhaps) too harshly-drawn mother. The insulted woman goes further: she burns the letters which would have destroyed Lady Mereston's most sacred memories, and then—having up to now been perfectly quiet and restrained—she breaks out into a storm of emotional protest. The scene, which was splendidly conceived by the author and perfectly executed by the actress, profoundly moved the audience. Having triumphed and brought Lord Mereston, an ardent lover, to his knees, she refuses the great prize; but that he may not suffer overmuch by her refusal she makes the renunciation at her dressing-table, appearing first in the strong sunlight, bare of the charms her art of making-up added to her. It is exquisite comedy, this scene in which she gradually grows more beautiful, the while she cynically and lightheartedly explains "how it is done," till, at last, radiant as ever, she has crushed the passionate illusions out of the boy for ever.

There is a delightful interlude in the second act, when two young lovers have a dispute as to the education of their possible son, and the father, at first shocked at overhearing so improper a discussion, is drawn into it and becomes the most heated of them all. The young girl in this scene was charmingly played by Miss Beatrice Terry, who shows great promise of worthily carrying on the torch of her illustrious family. There is another interlude which shows Lady Frederick wheedling a dressmaker into taking back her demand to be paid. It was highly successful as showing one side of Lady Frederick's power, and it delighted me. The whole company ably seconded Miss Ethel Irving in her wonderful achievement, Mr. C. M. Lowne in a very telling part being particularly satisfactory.

The only fly in the amber of appreciation seems to be that Mr. Maughan is also the author of "A Man of Honour." Surely that he wrote that strong and powerful piece of realism should only make us more laudatory when he follows it with this witty, original and exquisitely-wrought study of a fascinating personality.

REGINALD TURNER.

CORRESPONDENCE

"LORD BACON"

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY,

SIR,—With all due deference to Mr. Alfred E. Thiselton, I still maintain that Francis Bacon's proper designation at no period of his career was "Lord Bacon."

Mr. Thiselton says that Bacon, between his positions as Lord Keeper and Lord Chancellor, "would properly be described as 'my Lord Bacon,' or 'Lord Bacon,'" and that "Sir Edward Coke was never raised to the peerage, and yet he was known as 'Lord Coke.'"

Will you kindly allow me to support my contention by a reference to what Spedding, Bacon's great biographer and editor, writes on the subject? His verdict ought to be of some weight in the discussion:

It was doubtless as Verulam, or Lord Verulam, that he (Bacon) expected the next ages to know him and speak of him. I think everybody who has been concerned with him as editor or biographer must agree with me in regretting that the next ages did not take the hint. Being invited to call him by a name as handsome in sound and associations as any that England could have furnished, they have fixed upon him one of the ugliest and most vulgar; a name associated chiefly with the poorest kind of joke (and quite as much so since he bore it as before), and so common-place, that in order to make it serve the purpose of distinguishing him from the rest of his surname at all, they have been obliged to invest it with a title to which it never had any pretence [Lord Bacon]. An attempt has indeed been made of late to justify the title of "Lord Bacon" by the analogy of "Lord Coke," "Lord Hale," and others. And it is true that *chief justices* retained in popular speech the prefix of "Lord," though never made Peers. But this practice did not extend to the judges in Chancery. Sir Thomas More was Lord Chancellor More, but was never called Lord More. Sir Nicholas Bacon was Lord Keeper Bacon, but was never called Lord Bacon. And so through all the list of Lord Keepers, Lord Chancellors, and Masters of the Rolls. Francis Bacon is the only one who even in popular speech ever bore the prefix of "Lord," otherwise than in conjunction with the title under which he was called to the Upper House."

This is plain enough, and to my mind conclusive that the title "Lord Bacon" is a misnomer.

GEORGE STRONACH.

"THANKING YOU IN ANTICIPATION"

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—This phrase is now becoming common. I think it is one of the meanest ever invented, and one of the most insulting; for it implies that, however much pains the worker may take, he will get no thanks for it afterwards. Why should he? He has been thanked already.

It further implies an imperious and insufferable demand,

which must and shall have immediate attention, on pain of being considered no gentleman. Surely no one who really respects a correspondent ought to employ this touting bag-man's phrase.

WALTER W. SKEAT.

TRAVELLING ON SUNDAY

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—Unless the question of Sunday travelling is not sufficiently literary, scientific, or artistic to merit further space in your columns, may I refer to a point mentioned at the Church Congress early in the month? A speaker said he had read in a newspaper that 420,000 men are employed every Sunday in taking people about. Is it, as Mr. Algernon Ashton declares, "abjectly crazy" for the clergy to object to this? Why on earth should any "one's imagination positively reel" at a protest against such unselfishness? When travelling makes it impossible for 420,000 men to observe Sunday as either a day of worship or a day of rest, how are the clergy and others "inconceivably silly" to object to it? Such discourteous phrases come very strangely from one who is trying to accuse the clergy of inconsistency by saying that they are "travelling," when they walk from their houses to their churches. "Skeat's Dictionary" tells us that the root idea of "travel" is "toil"; the clergy object to Sunday travelling (in the ordinary use of the word, not according to Mr. Ashton's unworthy quibble) because it imposes toil on others as well as on the travellers themselves.

Is there so much difference between the Catholic and Calvinistic ideas on Sunday amusement, applied to present circumstances, as your editorial note in last week's issue implies? Mediaeval amusements took place on the village green, and other localities close at hand, and so did not interfere with the observance of Sunday as a day of worship. The clergy of to-day object to Sunday amusements because many of them make it impossible for Sunday to be kept as a day of worship. Many of the clergy advocate amusements and recreations as far as they do not interfere with this. But the more toil amusements necessitate the more does the Catholic idea conform with the Calvinistic.

Because the clergy wish everyone to have the opportunity of keeping Sunday as a day of worship or of rest, Mr. Ashton calls them "inconceivably silly." When they try to promote unselfishness they are doing an "abjectly crazy" thing. Such is the doctrine of the self-constituted Apostle of Selfishness!

But perhaps some poor parson had the misfortune to tread (should I say "travel"?) on Mr. Ashton's pet corn on the day he wrote that amazing letter.

October 21.

C. O. A.

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—In dealing with the question of travelling on Sunday, Mr. Algernon Ashton might well have omitted from his list of examples such forms of travelling as walking, cycling, and swimming, which do not requisition labour from outside sources—the inclusion of the latter means of locomotion being particularly incongruous. One cannot very well be expected to imagine the sight of a man divesting himself of his clothing on the Embankment at, say, Waterloo or Charing Cross, on a chilly Sabbath morning, plunging into the river, and undertaking a few hours' swim in order to pay his mother-in-law a visit at Battersea Park or Hammersmith. The problem of transporting his clothes, and the process of drying himself on arrival, would be rather embarrassing drawbacks.

However, what Mr. Ashton no doubt meant to convey to us was his utter contempt for those narrow-minded people who consider it wrong to travel on Sundays, if, by so doing, they become parties to the employment of human labour; and your correspondent, in his usual terse fashion, characterises such folk as "crazy and incredibly silly." Although a Christian man myself, I am in complete concurrence with the views of Mr. Ashton, and in total disagreement with the two saintly (apparently, of course) persons who voice their opinions regarding this question in a recent issue.

Because a man is a Christian, why should he be a bigot and devoid of common sense? Is it not possible to combine Christianity with the latter essential quality? To my mind, there is no person more sickening and irritating to a broad-minded man than the obstinate fanatic, who is usually as inconsistent in his actions as he is objectionable. He it is who is the first to condemn this or the other act as unfitting for performance on the Sabbath, while, all the time, he may be equally ready to violate the laws of those during the week. Surely it would

be better to be a freethinker or an atheist than a maudlin hypocrite.

Then, again, do these extraordinary people, who clamour for a discontinuance of Sunday labour, realise for one single moment what such a step would mean? If their suggestions were considered there would be no local, provincial, or Continental train service, nor any kind of public conveyance in the streets; no police to protect us from robbery and violence, and fires would have to burn themselves out; all restaurants, post offices, and concert-halls would have to be closed, and hotel proprietors be compelled to turn out their visitors on Saturday nights in order to give their servants a rest; there would be no delivery of letters in the country, and the milkman would cease to call; we should have to light our own fires, clean our own boots, and cook our own food—in a word, the disorganisation would be so appalling that the non-employment of labour on Sundays would be an absolute and utter impossibility.

If those who hitherto advocated such a move still think it practicable after carefully weighing the foregoing factors, which so obviously militate against it, all I can say is that they are only fit to be relegated to those institutions which are ready to receive with open arms the pitiable specimens of humanity who, through monomania, or some other deplorable cause, have to be isolated from their normal-minded brothers and sisters.

O. MONA BALTHASAR.

October 22.

THE HYPOCHONDRIA OF ART

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—It is not easy to delve out the leading idea of Mr. Clutton-Brock's article, in spite of its simple diction and homely phraseology. One is painfully tossed about by the "But" that commences most of his sentences. If I am not mistaken, the gist of his matter is that the culture of so-called æsthetic tastes, rather than the reading of technical criticism, on the part of the public will save the situation for the painter.

Is Mr. Clutton-Brock holding a brief for the art-and-crafty business, the affectation of which is nauseating to every true artist? Or is he mixing up painters with "collectors"—two classes positively opposed in spirit? I doubt very much whether Turner cared a rap about the shapes of his cups and saucers so long as they would hold tea. Millet was content with a peasant's environment. Similar instances come numerous to the mind with the least effort of memory. It is to be presumed that what Mr. Clutton-Brock considers necessary to the lay mind is equally, if not more, necessary to the professional. Nevertheless, your painter who has a studio half marine store and half luxurious retreat is usually an indifferent painter. The writer affirms that "Art and taste begin at home, and are made by the production and enjoyment of things that most nearly concern us. Just as ornament is the overflow of energy, so pictures are but the overflow of Art. There must be a superfluity of Art in things that are useful before it can find its way into things that are useless," and so on. Here are many assertions, each of which is open to contradiction. For my own part, I believe that the reverse is true in every case.

Further, does not the writer of the article keep his subject needlessly in the clouds by insisting so much upon pictures being made with joy? It smacks of the worst manner of Ruskin. Pictures, if they are worth anything, are not made with joy. They are made with striving and travail and vexation of spirit. The joy comes before and after; when the subject first inspires, and when the work is well received upon completion. Whether the case is different with pots and pans I do not know, but personally I do not believe in the singing, smiling craftsman. That idea is the outcome of Ruskin flavoured with Morris. Such a condition of mind may exist in a house-painter or a scarecrow, but is incompatible with any concentrated mental effort, as Mr. Clutton-Brock must have experienced when writing his article.

One does not quite know how to take his meaning of the word "illusion." Modern painting seems to deal rather with moods than with illusions of reality. Only in the art-school is it true that "painters are now taught to aim at the most complete illusion of reality," and surely that is the proper method for a course of training.

It would seem that the wilful and wanton departure from the straight road to illusion, or rather, the too easy capture of a quasi-illusion, is what really stands between many a painter and most "men in the street." The latter quite honestly and wisely say, "Why should we buy pictures that do not look like nature as we ourselves see and enjoy it?" They would

write themselves down affected asses if they did make such purchases. Painters fail in selling because they persist in painting for each other; then they blame the public because it is uninitiated. Musicians do not charge for admittance at their practices upon their instruments; yet this is practically what the artist does. They should respect, and not scorn, that sensitive corner of the public mind where they might easily gain a welcome, and, once in possession, might readily extend and develop the congenial soil. This is the only way to bring back the old days of a public love for pictures.

An æsthetic taste for *bric-à-brac*, such as Mr. Clutton-Brock recommends, is likely to lead too rapidly to *debased* taste, and it does not appear to me to have anything to do with the matter, any more than the collecting of postage-stamps. Of its possible results our "New Art" fiasco ought to be evidence enough. Yet Mr. Clutton-Brock would have half the painters turn their hands to pottery and poker-work. Crockery that is prized is, in the matter of form, often no better than the penny cup in the oilman's basket, whilst his iron saucepan is excellently designed, yet probably more curses than expressions of joy go to the making of these things.

Mr. Clutton-Brock is to be thanked for his wise words upon the matter of technical criticism for the public. To dole this stuff out in a halfpenny newspaper is ridiculous. Artists should have a newspaper of their own for this sort of thing. But our art magazines are either cumbersome picture books, "prize competition" mediums, or collectors' "exchanges."

F. C. TILNEY.

THE ABOLITION OF THE CENSORSHIP

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—What is the real reason for demanding Mr. Redford's head on a charger? So far as I can see, the people clamouring for the abolition of the censorship are confined almost entirely to disappointed playwrights who fail to obtain licences for dramatic versions of the Table of Affinity and the Seventh Commandment. People who, on the other hand, are content to find their inspiration in subjects that do not outrage ordinary decency never appear to have any trouble in satisfying the authorities.

Under the present regulations, and interpreting them broadly, Mr. Redford is prepared to pass practically any alleged "play" that is neither irreligious nor grossly indecent. Who can reasonably object to this? Besides, it must be remembered that the angry author who fails to satisfy the official standard of morality can always give his deathless drama to the world in book-form afterwards, prefaced with the alluring note, "This is a play which the Lord Chamberlain refused to license." Then everybody shouts "Shame!" at the top of his voice and rushes off in hot haste to buy a copy.

Although self-appointed upholders of what is humorously termed "Free Trade in the Drama" may declaim against the censorship until they are blue in the face, I, for one, strongly uphold it. Personally, indeed, I would go a good deal further than does Mr. Redford, and to irreligion and immorality I would add dullness and stupidity as disqualifications for production. This, I am firmly convinced, would prove a welcome innovation. At any rate, it would undoubtedly tend to prevent a long-suffering audience being subjected to boredom, while it would also send into well-earned retirement leading ladies who have qualified for old-age pensions, young women with "pasts," red-nosed comedians with doubtful jokes, impossibly faithful family butlers, and saintly children who ask golden-haired heroines why poor father (who went to Heaven—or else to prison—in the first act) doesn't come home.

When Parliament meets I trust some energetic members—failing prompt action by the Amusements Committee of the L.C.C.—will embody this highly desirable measure in a short Act, which might be entitled "An Act for the Better Preservation of the British Drama," and lay it before the House. Its main purpose will be to provide for the refusal to license all plays, stage pieces, and theatrical representations generally, which—on expert examination by duly constituted authority—are found to be either dull, stupid, gloomy, pretentious, boring, unnecessarily long, spuriously poetic, absurd, devoid of good taste, or in any way calculated to make one tired, or to be regarded as a nuisance. Such an Act shall certainly have my vote and influence, for in it I see the first real step towards the Renaissance of the English stage from the slough in which it is at present wallowing.

Perhaps the committee of the Playgoers' Club will take the matter up.

HORACE WYNDHAM.

[A lengthy list of Books Received has been unavoidably held over, also some Correspondence.]

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Mr. R. B. Haldane and "Public Opinion."

The Right Hon. R. B. Haldane, M.P., Secretary for War, has addressed the following letter to the Editor of PUBLIC OPINION:—

WAR OFFICE, 1st October, 1907.

Dear Mr. Parker,

I think that in the new form of "Public Opinion" under your editorship, you do well to make prominent what is concrete and living in the shape of the opinions maturely formed of men who are trying to do the work of the nation and of journalists, the standard of whose criticism is high. What interests people is that which is expressed in a concrete form and has in it the touch of humanity. The views of strenuous spirits and the criticisms of really competent critics given in their own words comply with this condition. Your paper will succeed if it can only keep up to this standard, and I think you have brought it on to the right lines.

Yours faithfully,

R. B. HALDANE.

Percy L. Parker, Esq.,
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